THEODORE BLISS

PUBLISHER
AND
BOOKSELLER

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A Study of Character and Life
in the Middle Period of the
XIX Century

Edited and arranged for publication, from dictation, notes, and remembered conversations, by

Arthur Ames Bliss

Printed for private circulation

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INTRODUCTION

These memoirs were written as a means of entertainment for a very old man, who during thirty years had been retired by his infirmities more and more from the world of active men to the seclusion of his chamber and life in an invalid's chair. We had not advanced far, however, into the story of his experiences, before it dawned upon me that I was dealing with something almost akin to a human document; that this firm old Puritan and Stoic was chronicling the life and times of a period relatively modern, and yet so completely different in its ideals and methods from the present that it belonged to past history—to something ended yet worthy of record. And it appeared to me that the narrator was himself a striking type of the finished product of his times.

Theodore Bliss belonged to a race that was typical of America from the Puritan settlements until the Civil War. For generations the old English stock of New England had been disturbed so little by influences from without, its communities had remained so fixed, its inhabitants had intermarried with their own kin and kind to such an extent, that, in this unchanging environment, a specialization had developed which could be called American, or, in the slang of the day, Yankee. There was nothing just like it anywhere else in the world. In physical and moral characteristics, in methods of thought, in speech, it deserved the recognition of being a distinct branch of the English-speaking races. Following the Civil War, great changes occurred by the influx of strange and foreign races, by the desire for wealth, and increased opportunities for its acquisition, by a change of religious faith, whereby old standards were altered and personal

freedom in interpretation of theology tolerated and accepted. In addition to these changes, there had been a numerical weakening of the old New Englanders, by reason of deaths in the war and by migration to the great cities and to the West.

There can be no doubt that what remained of the old stock, in New England itself, bore the marks of a decadence. This was shown by the large number of unmarried men as well as unmarried women; by the small number of children born to married couples; by the rather feeble physique of this offspring when compared with that of the newer and more vigorous races. So the Yankee type, or "American" of New England, has been so disturbed that we must wait for many generations before anything so specialized and distinctive will appear again. We have Germans in America, Irish in America, Poles, Bohemians, Italians, Rumanians, and Syrians in America, but these are still distinct and segregated, or are only in process of amalgamation. We cannot predict what final type of man will be evolved. It is more than likely that, under favorable influences of government, secular and religious education, and domestic economy, a very superior race will be developed, but it will differ greatly from the homogeneous stock of the older settlers.

I feel that Theodore Bliss stands as an exceptionally good type of that older stock, and that the story of his life reveals the social conditions of the people of the "middle class" before the modern influences, I have enumerated, altered the course of social and race development, and turned the page on some finished chapters of human life and endeavor in America.

Arthur Ames Bliss.

Philadelphia, April 14, 1911.

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

Birthplace—Parents—Financial disaster at time of birth—Illness of father—Elam Bliss—The household and its members—Daily life of a New England boy, little play, much work—The New England "Sabbath."

I was born on August 23, 1822, in Northampton, Massachusetts, in the house built by my father, William Bliss, on the northeastern corner of South and Fruit Streets.

My father was a carpenter and builder, and I have been told by persons well acquainted with him that he was a man of unusual ambition and energy. I remember almost nothing of his character, because a series of very distressing circumstances culminated in a mental illness that removed him from our home circle, at a time when I was an infant. He was a handsome man, with rather stern face, dark hair and eyes, and short, compact figure.

The tenderest recollections of my early childhood cluster about the memory of my mother. She was Martha, the oldest daughter of Timothy Parsons, who belonged to one of the oldest families of Northampton, being descended from one of its founders far back in 1650. Timothy Parsons lived in a house on South Street, built by his father, Noah Parsons. It stood near the roadway, almost in front of the house now occupied by Mr. Henry J. Williams, which itself stands very near the site of my great-grandfather's large barn. Here the two daughters of Timothy, my mother, Martha, and her sister Mary, grew to womanhood. It was a typical New England home of those old times. Although possessed of ample means, as fortunes were estimated in those days, the daughters of the house were an important part of its working force, and took full share in the domestic affairs of the household. Like most of their neighbors and friends, they

belonged to a strongly religious community, where the idea of responsibility to God and one's fellow man crystallized itself in a sense of duty, in which a very important part of the service to God was doing well and faithfully what lay at hand to be done in the home. Added to this was the unquestioning faith in the theology of the Church, as it was then taught and preached in New England. True, it was a stern religion, but it was free from the restlessness of doubt.

My mother was one of the most unselfish, devoted, and excellent women I have ever known. She was of medium height, slight in figure, with brown hair and fair complexion. Possessed of a gentle, sweet temperament, she was on friendly relations with all her circle of acquaintances. Her sister Mary married a Mr. Pomeroy, who was, for a time, editor or publisher of the *Hampshire Gazette,* an important Northampton newspaper that has continued even to the present days. Before I was old enough to know him, Mr. Pomeroy left Northampton with my aunt Mary and moved to Woodstock, Vermont, where he published a paper in that town. My aunt had one daughter, who married a Mr. Dutton, a wholesale merchant of Boston.

About the time of my birth, my father had become responsible to his brother, Elam Bliss, an apothecary of Springfield, Massachusetts, for an amount of money that was large for those simple times. Elam Bliss having need for this sum, to be used in his business, persuaded my father to indorse a note covering the loan he had made, and thus becoming responsible for its payment. My uncle Elam failed. So the tragedy of my parents' lives was developed. All the estate that my father had accumulated was lost; but, worse than this, the property which my mother had inherited from her father, Timothy Parsons, was swept away at the same time. This had been a very fair amount of real estate and money, as viewed in those times; for my grandfather Parsons had been in quite comfortable financial circumstances. I have an impression that he and his father, Noah Parsons, had

owned a very large part of Mount Holyoke, as well as large tracts of land on Mount Tom. The lumber on both of these mountains was of considerable value. Then, too, Timothy Parsons, according to the modest customs of the times, had lived well. He was always carefully dressed in an old-time costume, with knee breeches and buckled shoes. Indeed, when driving about in his carriage, he presented the appearance of a stately old gentleman.

By this financial disaster, that occurred almost at my birth, my father was left without any means of support; and the effect of the blow upon him was of such a character that never again was he able to do anything for the support of his family. At this time, too, in the midst of his anxiety and distress, he had a very severe illness. Such a combination of causes resulted in the development of a mental disease from which he never recovered. In those early days there were few institutions for the treatment of insanity. For a time my poor father was cared for in his home, it being necessary even to restrain him by force. The situation is a very terrible one to review—my gentle mother facing poverty, her husband suddenly bereft of his reason, the care of a young infant, the nursing of a man violently insane, and a dark outlook for help in the future. By the aid of friends, my father was, at last, removed to Boston and placed in a private asylum for the mentally deranged. A few years later, when the state asylum at Worcester was built, he was admitted to that institution, probably among its first inmates. He was never to recover his reason, but his life was prolonged until 1855, when he died at the Worcester asylum, at the age of seventy-eight years. For many years he was cared for by my brothers, William and George, and myself. This is all a very painful subject, but is a part of my life. I recall a visit that I made to him at Worcester. The institution stood on a hill, with wide-extended views over a beautiful country. The grounds about the building were very extensive. On this occasion I was with the superintendent. We

found my father in the gardens, half reclining on a bench in the shade of trees. He started up at our approach, and regarded us earnestly but suspiciously. I feared to converse with him, lest some train of thought might excite him or produce ill effects. When he died, I directed that the funeral should take place at Northampton. The services were held at the home of my sister, Caroline Kingsley. He rests in the beautiful, quiet graveyard of Northampton, beside his faithful wife.

I have no knowledge that my uncle Elam ever returned the money which was lost by my father's indorsement of his notes, or that he aided my family in any way. He left Springfield, and established himself as a bookseller in Boston. Later, he removed to New York, where he was very successful in the same business. He was an exceedingly popular man among his colleagues in the trade, and was on familiar terms with William Cullen Bryant, Paulding, and other authors. He was an Episcopalian, an active member of Trinity Church, and published many church books. Indeed, he was somewhat of a theological student in his reading. During his career as a publisher in New York, he was on close terms with the house of Harper Brothers, just then beginning its successful history. The Harpers commenced business as publishers of books that had been popular in England and Scotland. Before printing these books, they arranged with about four firms of New York booksellers, among them that of my uncle, Elam Bliss, to purchase the editions of the books to be printed. It was not an extensive undertaking, as we reckon things now. Probably each house took about one thousand copies of a book. My impression is, that my uncle Elam was a man of energy and ambition, but that he was hampered by want of capital for his business undertakings. This may explain why he failed to repay the loss which my father suffered by the indorsement of those unfortunate notes. My editor seems to be impressed by the episode in the lives of these two brothers, in which disaster, mental anguish, and physical suffering came upon innocent

people, while the man who caused this tragedy lived happily on in the sunshine of life. It might be food for philosophers, but, for myself, I have no uncharitable feeling towards Elam Bliss. A word more, and he passes from this history. His success as a publisher in New York came to an end by his failure in business, doubtless because of inadequate capital for his energetic undertakings. Through the influence of Mr. William Cullen Bryant, who was editor of the *New York Evening Post,* he was appointed an appraiser at the United States custom-house at New York. This post he retained until his death. He was a bachelor, and lived at the City Hotel, close by Trinity Church, and there he died.

We were a large family, eleven children, of whom I was the last. When I came into the world, most of the other children had grown up and were married. I have the pleasantest memories of all my sisters. Maria, the oldest, was married to Charles James Allen, of New Haven. Martha married Mr. James H. Dunham, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Caroline's husband was Mr. Charles P. Kingsley, of Northampton, Massachusetts. Nancy married Mr. Luther H. Graves, whose business was in Northampton, but who moved later to Williamstown, Massachusetts, where he died. Laura Hubbard died in infancy.

My oldest brother was Chester. While learning his business, or trade, at New Haven, Connecticut, he ran away to New York and shipped on a vessel sailing to a South American port. I have seen a very well-expressed letter from my father about this episode. He was greatly distressed at Chester's act, and, on the boy's return from his first voyage, he made a strong effort to persuade his adventurous son to return to the study of his trade in New Haven. His efforts failed. The boy had that longing for the sea, so common among the young men of New England, in those days. Chester sailed away again, and his vessel was never heard from; probably lost in some West Indian storm.

My brother William learned his trade as bookbinder, in New

Haven, in the publishing house of Durry & Peck. He returned to Northampton and entered the bindery of J. H. Butler, where he was the chief binder and foreman until his early death, at the age of thirty-six years.

My third brother, Edward Eli, learned the trade of a tailor with our brother-in-law, James Dunham, of Pittsfield. Being attracted to the West, where many New Englanders were moving, about the years near 1830, he joined a party of friends and went to Ohio, where they took land and settled in the vicinity of what was, later, the city of Columbus. Like many of the newcomers to this region, Edward contracted malaria, from which he suffered for many years. Returning to Northampton, he established himself in business as a tailor, with my brother-in-law, Luther Graves, as partner. Late in life, Edward purchased a farm situated about two miles from Worcester, Massachusetts, where he lived until his death. His wife was a most estimable woman, and there was a large family of children.

George Bliss was my fourth brother. Between his birth and that of myself, two children were born, named Laura and Henry. These both died in early infancy. Thus, although George was six years older than myself, he was so much nearer to me in age than any of my other brothers and sisters, that my relations with him were closer and more intimate than with the older children. He was to have a remarkable career, the importance of which was little realized, when we fished Mill River together or worked in our small garden. When George was sixteen years of age, he went to New Haven, Connecticut, and entered the dry goods store of Hervey Sanford, where he advanced quickly in the appreciation of his employer, and, before he was twenty-one years old, was intrusted with the purchasing of most of the goods sold by the firm, such purchases being made in New York and other cities. One morning, in the early days of his employment in this house, when his duties were those of errand boy and general helper, Mr. Sanford happened to arrive at his store

at a very early hour. George was the only clerk present, and was engaged in sweeping the floor of the salesroom. Mr. Sanford expressed some surprise that his new errand boy was at his post so early, especially as none of the other clerks had appeared. This surprise was considerably increased when George informed him that a customer had appeared on the scene, even thus early, and that, in order that the customer should not be disappointed, George had taken it on himself to act as a salesman. The goods purchased by the customer had been piled carefully on a counter and were ready for delivery. A boy who could begin his work with this unusual manifestation of zeal for his employer's interests was sure to be appreciated. In time, George became a very intimate friend of Mr. Sanford's family. He married his employer's daughter, Catherine. Mr. Sanford retired from the dry goods trade and devoted his attention to the affairs of the New Haven County Bank, of which he was president. His son, William Sanford, and my brother George succeeded him in the cloth business. The heavy work of management fell almost entirely on George. Meanwhile, several urgent solicitations had come to him from merchants of New York to connect himself with them in business. Finally, he formed a copartnership with Simeon G. Chittenden, under the firm name of Chittenden & Bliss, and the new firm began its business on Wall Street, in New York, a few doors from Broadway. The trade of this house became so extended that a large building was rented, at the corner of Broadway and Rector Street, where the business was continued for many years. The firm became large importers of certain lines of goods from Europe, and George was obliged to go abroad almost every year to make purchases. The voyages were made, of course, in sailing vessels, and he was absent from home for many weeks. By the year 1850, the importing business had increased so greatly that my brother took his family to Manchester, England, and resided in that city for several years. When he returned with his family

to America, so many changes had developed in the management of the New York house, owing to the introduction of new men, not known personally by my brother, that, on account of this, combined with other causes, too, he was led to separate from his partner, Chittenden, and form a new firm, with John J. Phelps as partner. Mr. Phelps was a wealthy merchant of New York, the father of William Walter Phelps. The store was located in Park Place; but, later, they purchased the building and ground of the old Tabernacle Congregational Church, built a large warehouse and store on its site, and removed to this new building in 1857. For several years, Mr. Phelps continued in the business, but eventually my brother bought out his partner's interest and continued the business alone, under the firm name of George Bliss & Company. This house, of real historic note among the dry goods houses of America, was in my brother's hands until the year 1868, when he united with Levi P. Morton to establish the well-known banking house of Morton, Bliss & Company. Many years after the death of his first wife, George married Miss Augusta Smith, of New Haven, Connecticut. Their life together was in every way a happy one. Two children, a boy and a girl, were born to them. My brother was within a few months of the age of eighty years when he died. I am told that his influence for good, in financial affairs of New York, is still felt; for he was a splendid type of an able and honest banker.

It will be seen, from this brief sketch of the members forming our family circle, that I was rather alone, in respect to the companionship of children of my own age, in our household. But I had a hearty welcome to so many pleasant homes, where my married sisters were the mistresses, that my life was far from being one of isolation. Then, too, there were so many activities in a New England home, in which the small boy of the house was an enforced participant, that there was little time for idle-

ness. There is always time for mischief, and I was not an example of perfect docility.

Until my mother's death, when I had reached the age of eleven years and seven months, my life had been similar to other boys of those far-off days. The time from daylight to bedtime was filled in with doing errands, taking the cow to pasture and back, milking, piling wood in our woodshed that had been brought in from the woodland. After the garden had been made and planted, I had the charge of keeping it free from weeds. We were fortunate in having a pleasant home, in spite of the disasters that had lost to us our old one. At the time of my father's failure, in consideration of her signature to the deed conveying her property, for which her husband had become responsible, my mother was given the building that had been my father's shop. It stood near our old home, at the southeast corner of South and Fruit Streets. With this there was about two and a half acres of land. We had, also, about twenty-five acres of woodland, located about two miles from the town, on the road to Westhampton. I traveled this road frequently, in company with our cow, on journeys to or from home for the latter's welfare. Added to these possessions, there remained still in our hands a small tract of land in the beautiful Northampton meadows, that was a part of my mother's inheritance from Timothy Parsons. The workshop of my father was altered into a dwelling, and this became our home. It had a large attic; and I remember that the dark corners of this chamber formed regions full of interest for me, on days when it seemed well to be beyond call, or when I was really off duty, with nothing better to do in the world outside. Here was an old musket of Revolutionary days. Perhaps its last shot had been fired at Saratoga, when my grandfather Bliss had marched away with the levies from western Massachusetts, to form a part of Gates's army against Burgoyne. Here, too, were books on building and architecture that my father had studied and used

in his trade. The dim shadows revealed outlines of old furniture and many relics of other days and other lives.

My mother's cousin, Justin Parsons, whose fine, old, roomy house, built by his father, stood very near to our home, was always most kind and ever willing to assist us in the cultivation of our land. He did the plowing and planting without any charge, except a return for this service in the help given in his own farm work by George and myself. He supplied us with a horse when one was needed to take corn to the mill for grinding, or for any purpose where a horse was required.

I had the free run of this pleasant house and its homeland. Its women folk were ever ready to supply the needed cooky or bit of pie, sweet to the taste and pleasant even in long recollection. The pantry was a storehouse of good things, and has a friendly corner in the storehouse of my memory.

Perhaps the hardest work that I, as a small boy, was called upon to do, was to bring water from Mill River on wash days. I carried the water in two buckets, by means of a hoop. I walked inside the hoop, holding its rim, and the buckets balanced one another. Thus the weight was distributed. But the bank of Mill River was high and steep for the short legs of a small boy, and I had to wade out into water sufficiently deep to find a supply that was clear of sand or mud. True, we had a hogshead set in the ground, by the door of our kitchen, to catch rain water from the roof, but, in the droughts of summer, it happened frequently that this was exhausted. Then I was mustered into service as water-carrier.

Life was not all work, however. I swam in the pool above the dam, and fished Mill River from the village of Florence to the Connecticut. Especially attractive was it to climb in under the gristmill, along the race, and fish right at the dam. Eels, bullheads, sunfish, all rose to my hook, and, one day, I caught the king of the river. It happened on a day late in spring, when I was about six years old. Out of the river I pulled a fish about

the size of a shad. Perhaps it was a shad. It might just as well have been a shark, as far as its effect on my imagination. Realizing that it was unwise to attempt any release from the hook, I grasped the line and ran home with the dangling monster as fast as my small legs could carry me.

There were games of baseball and football with the small boys of my neighborhood; in summer, the search of upland meadows for berries, and the autumnal delight of ranging the leaf-strewn woods for nuts.

During the winter, I attended school in a wretched frame building, with most imperfect sanitary arrangements, standing opposite the Starkweather house and adjoining the garden of Bohan Clark. We younger scholars were accommodated in the lower story, and the older children had the floor above us for their schoolroom. The school months lasted from November to May, and the hours were from nine o'clock to noon and from one o'clock to the hour of four in the afternoon. When I was about nine or ten years old, I went to a private school kept by a Mr. Gray. One year later, the town built a respectable school building in the center of a large lot at the rear of the First Church. I went to this school, and there widened my circle of acquaintances, meeting boys from other parts of the town; and here I attended school until I was twelve years of age. Northampton had not yet developed a high school.

During those early days, our household consisted of mother, Nancy, William, and myself. No servant was employed. My mother and Nancy did all the work of the house. However, when extra sewing was needed, Hester Pomeroy, one of the professional needlewomen of the town, came to our house and remained until the work was completed. Hester, or "Easter," as she was called, like most of these itinerant seamstresses, was a character. These women were bearers of gossip, in fancy and fact, throughout the community, and were as diffusive of interesting information as modern newspapers.

The absence of servants in our home, however, would not have distinguished us from most of the New England people of those times. Outside of the large cities, it was the universal custom for members of a family to take care of themselves. The most refined and cultured women of our town conducted their well-kept homes without servants, or with hired helpers who were employed only during the storm and stress of spring and autumn house cleaning, or on other special occasions. The servant problem, as we suffer from it to-day, was unknown.

We always had a cow, with whose care I was particularly associated, and two pigs. Pigs were, for some reason, a source of pride with most of the townspeople. There was a certain ardor and zeal in having the fattest pigs of the neighborhood. Visitors were urged to gaze upon these brutes, that the owner might enjoy the satisfaction of believing his guest to be chagrined at the vision of beauty before his eyes, and the thought that his own pens failed in such lardaceous development. It was one of the events of the year, when, in November, a pig was sacrificed and the meat was salted down and many pounds of sausage prepared. Thus we had always a barrel of our own good salt pork. Another standard supply for the long winter was a barrel of salt beef, and Connecticut River salted shad. We had, of course, the usual winter vegetables—potatoes, turnips, and parsnips—stored away from our garden, and corn was brought home from our land in the meadows. The corn still in husks was thrown on the floor of our wagon-house, and on some evening, late in autumn, we had a "husking," when the neighbors assembled and made the usual social event of clearing the cobs. These were stored in bins, and then my part of the work was at hand. By means of a shovel, laid upwards at a slant against some firm support, while I sat astride of the handle, it was my pleasant duty to scrape off the dried kernels from the cobs by rasping the latter against the shovel's edge. Then the kernels were gathered into bags and taken to the gristmill. The meal thus obtained

was used for making "hasty pudding" for ourselves and for those fat pets outside in the pen. We had fresh meat, at intervals, supplied by the butcher from his wagon, as he went from house to house. Altogether, we lived very well on the staple dishes of the New England household. The hard work and constant activity, the cold, crisp air of winter days, all tended to good appetite; and if good digestion was not in equal proportion, this was our own fault.

The labors of the week closed on Saturday evening, at sundown. At this hour all secular work ceased. It was as sacred as Sunday itself. Sunday was observed most rigidly, and no work, except what was unavoidable, was done on that day until sundown. Then life slipped its tether, and the sacred observances of the Lord's day were at an end. Men and women could work and amuse themselves. The small boy could play. The older boy could visit his friends, more particularly his feminine admiration. This relaxation of religious tension was acceptable, for the church services of Sunday were decidedly strenuous. My mother was a strict attendant at church, when she was able to go there; for the sad, hard years had sapped her strength, and towards the latter part of her life she was quite feeble.

Morning service began at half after ten o'clock, closing about noon. Then Sunday school opened immediately, in the same room. My class happened to be held in our own family pew. This service closed at one o'clock. Then came one half hour for a hastily taken lunch. Outside the church edifice, the farmers, from far and near, had fastened their horses to posts on Main Street, or their wagons were stalled in the horse sheds, near by. These parishioners from a distance spent the half hour in eating a sort of picnic lunch brought in their wagons, while we of the town hurried home to cold viands. It was quick action, for, at half after one o'clock, we must all be back again in church for the afternoon service. This came to an end about three o'clock. That evening there was a warm supper, a real dinner, in fact,

and hungry people to enjoy it. But, in that quiet hour before the evening meal, my mother took me to her room, and I repeated the catechism to her. Perhaps she had a certain tender anxiety about me, as I was the youngest of her flock; and the thought must have haunted her mind, that she must leave me soon alone in the world. It was my habit to throw myself down on her bed and lie there answering the questions, while she sat in her chair close by me.

Our church was a very beautiful specimen of that peculiar Greek temple design, built of wood, that was common to this country at that period. I doubt if a more beautiful building of this type existed in Massachusetts. The proportions of its façade were excellent, and its various orders were consistent in their pure Greek forms. It had been built about the year 1800, on ground occupied by an earlier edifice. About six years after its construction, the Unitarians formed their circle, under the encouragement of the prominent family of Lyman. About the year 1822, Mr. Coggswell, a partner of the historian, Bancroft, in a very celebrated school for boys, in Northampton, organized an Episcopal church. Little did my brother George or his family imagine, as we passed this edifice on Bridge Street, that, years afterwards, he was to present this Episcopal parish with its present beautiful church buildings of St. John the Evangelist, on Elm Street. Another member of our Old Church, as it came in time to be called, a Mr. Ensign, started a movement that resulted in the organization of a Baptist church. This was in 1830. Another colony went out from the old central body to form the Second Congregational, or Edwards, Church; for the town increased in population so greatly that a sister church was needed. All these religious societies, however, were offshoots from the ancient building on its hill by the Court House. Its destruction by fire was a sad loss to the community. Through some inexcusable carelessness of mechanics at work in repairing the roof, this beautiful building was set on fire and totally destroyed.

This happened in the year 1876. It could well have served as a model for a new structure, but the taste of the times demanded a different style of building. There is nothing distinctive or individual about the brownstone construction that stands now on the old foundations. The least objectionable feature about it is the Gothic spire, but the edifice is a poor substitute for the noble white front and graceful belfry of the older building.

The music for the church, in my boyhood, was supplied by a large volunteer choir, of which many of our best people were members. Once, each week, a rehearsal was held under the direction of the leader, George Lucas, later, Colonel Barr. There was no organ, the instrumental accompaniment being rendered by a small orchestra consisting of a violin, two flutes, a 'cello, and a bass viol. It was good music, ringing true and pure and sweet, like the gentler spirit that lay hidden beneath the stern exterior of New England's religious life. I fancy that, in the dark years of civil war that were coming, this church music of New England was to give hope and comfort to many a Yankee soldier, as he waded through the mire of Virginia roads, as he toiled in the trenches, as he stood alone on the picket line, as he lay dying on the field of battle, in prison, or in hospital. Perhaps something of its spirit was to mingle in the martial music, amid the rattle of the drums, that was to set the time for the steady tramp of the New England regiments marching to Southern fields, where there was to be made that fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel. But, when I was a boy, these dreadful years of conflict lay hidden far in the future.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL DAYS

Mother's death—Life in Pittsfield with sister Martha's family—A typical New England home—Canal boat journey from Northampton to New Haven—Life in sister Maria's home in New Haven—An ideal type of schoolmaster—End of school days and return to Northampton.

My mother died in March, 1834. This sad event was to bring great changes to me. My home life ended then, and, from that time, I was to sojourn in different places, according to the expediency of occasion. A short time before my mother's death, William had married Maria Cook and had brought his wife to our home. Very shortly after mother's death, Nancy married Luther Graves and went to a home of her own. I seemed suddenly to be unattached to anyone or any place. I fancy that my brother William found it rather a difficult problem to make a proper disposal of me. At all events, my good sister Martha came to the front, if not to the rescue, and insisted that I should become a member of her family in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Of course, this kind act was done from a feeling of sympathy for my loneliness, and also because Martha had no acquaintance with my brother William's wife. I went to Pittsfield and remained there for one year. During this time, Martha gave me the most devoted care and attention. As I have stated already, Martha had married James Dunham. During their married life, thirteen children were born to them, but, when I came to their home, only the beginnings of this large family were present, in the small persons of a few very young children.

Martha's household included her husband's two apprentices and two journeymen tailors. To assist her in the care of this large home she had one servant. Other helpers were hired,

however, when work was especially pressing. Mr. Dunham's store was located in the business center of Pittsfield. He was a generous and kindly man, but exceedingly independent and outspoken in his ideas. I wonder that a person so fearless in opposing what he believed to be wrong could have been so successful in business, in the confines of a small community. He was opposed to the use of tobacco and all forms of stimulants. Indeed, so strong was his antagonism to smoking, that I doubt if any of his three sons, themselves men of aggressive independence, ever contracted this habit. Most strenuous was he as an Abolitionist. Already throughout New England the movement against slavery was beginning to manifest itself. True, as yet, it was confined to a small number of earnest people who had the combative temperament that has been a rather marked peculiarity of New Englanders since the migration from the old country. Mr. Dunham was a deacon in the Second Congregational Church of the town, known as the South Church, from the fact of its location on South Street. My sister was much interested in this church, and was most hospitable, especially to visiting ministers and missionaries. She and her husband both sang in its choir. Perhaps the one luxury that Mr. Dunham indulged in was the ownership of a fast horse. He was very fond of horses, and always had a good one, which he cared for himself. It can be seen that Martha was a very busy woman, with all the cares of this large household; but, in spite of constant occupation, she was always cheerful. How often she must have been weary, even ill, from the exacting drudgery; yet no one in her home saw any signs of the modern ailment, "nerve exhaustion." It was almost heroic, this meeting the requirements of each busy day with a cheerful courage, and closing the day's long service of duties without a sign of petulance or irritability.

The year of my life in this pleasant home is a most agreeable memory. On my arrival, I was placed at school in a large, well-

equipped building, just at the rear of Mr. Dunham's house. It was not long before I made acquaintance with my school companions and joined in their sports; but it must be confessed that I was a very homesick boy. In spite of my pleasant surroundings, this nostalgia lasted throughout the whole year. So acute was it, in fact, that, seeing a familiar face on the street one day, I pursued the owner to his home and became a frequent visitor at his fireside. The man who attracted my attention was fully six years my senior, and was no less a personage than Dr. J. G. Holland. I had seen him at Northampton. There he had served as an apprentice in the office of the *Hampshire Gazette,* where he learned something of the printer's trade. He soon changed his interests, however, and entered the office of Dr. Barrett, of Northampton. Thus he started upon a medical career, and this had led him to Pittsfield, where he had become a student in the Berkshire Medical College. When the homesick youngster from his old town ventured to call upon him, Holland received me most kindly, and my occasional visits to this student, almost a man in years, were a source of comfort to me, that, doubtless, the future well-known author and editor never realized. While pursuing his medical studies, Holland wrote "communications," each week, to the *Springfield Republican.* This paper was then at the start of its successful career. Holland wrote under the *nom de plume* of Timothy Titcomb. His articles were characterized by a wholesome spirit of common sense. They were witty, written in a bright, attractive style, and were most popular. Later, they were collected and published in book form, under the title of "Timothy Titcomb's Letters." Here, at Pittsfield, then, was the beginning of Holland's real career, for he was destined to be a literary man instead of a practicing physician.

In Martha's pleasant home, I had more time for study and play than I had ever known before, but I am convinced that I was a very indifferent scholar. Some reason for this, besides slowly-developing mental aptitude, may have been the frequent

changes in my teachers. I was never in any school for a longer time than one year.

On my return to Northampton, after this year spent at Pittsfield, I found my home very much changed. Memories of my good mother were everywhere, but these served only to emphasize the changes. Nancy had gone. There was a strange mistress in the house; and a strange boy had made himself at home, it seemed to me, in the place that really was mine. This was my nephew, Charles W. Allen, two years my senior. He was the son of my sister Maria, who had married Mr. Allen, of New Haven. It seemed to me, that this rather plausible boy made himself very agreeable to my brother William. To some extent, I took up again the duties that had been mine in former years, among these, work in the garden. But, to my somewhat prejudiced mind, it seemed that Charles Allen received all the credit for what I had done. In many ways we clashed, sometimes even to a rough-and-tumble fight. It was an unhappy time for me, and I fancy that all the members of our family found that a rather unbearable situation was developing. Doubtless the temperaments of my brother William and myself may have been very similar, and one recognized the faults of the other without any desire to exercise charity or patience. Very soon it was decided that I should take the place of my nephew, Charles Allen, in the latter's family at New Haven. My sister Maria was cordial in her willingness to accept the care of me, and the next year of my life, my thirteenth year, was passed in her home.

I believe that it is safe for me to claim that I am the only person now living who ever traveled from Northampton to New Haven as I made that journey, in the September of 1835. It was as a passenger on a canal boat. Judge Hinckley, of Northampton, had planned, and very largely financed, the construction of a canal connecting our town with New Haven. Its promoters anticipated a brilliant future for this waterway. Of course, we had regular lines of stages, and heavy teams of wagons toiled

along the highways transporting merchandise. As yet no railroads had been built. Freight and passengers from New York came by steamboat to New Haven, and even directly to Hartford. From and to Hartford, merchandise was transshipped to flat-bottomed barges that were poled northward, against the swift current of the Connecticut, to the mouth of Mill River. Along this stream they were pushed to the foot of Pleasant Street, in Northampton, where the long, toilsome journey ended. At Windsor Locks and at the natural falls of the Connecticut, where the important city of Holyoke now stands, the barges entered short canals, by means of locks, which took them around these rapids. There was a warehouse for the storage of goods at the foot of Pleasant Street, and from there, downstream to Hartford, the voyage was an easy one. It was hoped that our new canal would end all this primitive river traffic, and give a rich financial profit to the owners. It was a failure, because it came too late. Soon a railroad down the valley was constructed, and its slower transportation was not needed. Its chief port in Northampton was on Canal Street, near the present site of the Edwards Church. Thence it went between the grounds now occupied by the Opera House and the Baptist Church, and crossed Mill River by a lofty aqueduct. This was built mainly of wood, and had a footpath, or towing path, sufficiently wide to accommodate three persons walking abreast. The outer edge of the aqueduct, however, was not more than eighteen inches to two feet in width. We used the footpath as a short cut from South Street to the business center of Northampton, or Main Street. More than once, I have crossed by the narrow outer parapet. A misstep to the canal side would have been harmless for me, as I was a skillful swimmer, but, on the other side, there was a sheer fall of many feet to the gorge of Mill River. The line of the canal was paralleled, later, by a railroad that, for this reason, was called the Canal Road. As one passes over it to-day, I am told, there can be seen still, at

intervals, traces of the ancient waterway. My editor tells me that, in his generation, when, as a boy, he rowed on the Connecticut, or with his comrades ranged along its banks, there was a deserted spot where traces of masonry could be seen. Between the broken walls, a shallow stream entered the river. In his time, this forgotten place was called "the mouth of the old canal." No one seemed to know its history. Doubtless this was an intake for the water of our Northampton-New Haven canal.

It was on a Monday morning, in September, that I boarded the ordinary canal boat, named the "Judge Hinckley," commanded by Capt. Quartus Clapp. This gallant craft had two cabins, one at either end. The forward one was a sort of forecastle for the crew, while the after cabin was used by the captain and any occasional passenger. The canal had been in operation only about six months, and our vessel was new. It is possible that I was forwarded by this means of transportation on account of greater safety and economy than that afforded by the stage route. The crew consisted of two men for general work, and a boy to drive the two horses. We sailed away from the port of Northampton at about ten o'clock on that Monday morning. It was a delightful trip to me, through the beautiful farm lands, in that fine autumn weather. I spent most of my time afoot on the towpath, helping to drive the two horses harnessed tandem, or astride of one of them, for a ride. I ranged through the fine orchards of apples that lay along our way, getting good fruit from the trees, or wandered over the fields that bordered our waterway. Our ship's rations were of the plainest, cooked by one of the crew. At night our horses rested from their labors, the boat was moored to the canal's bank, and all hands went to sleep. The passage through the various locks afforded me much interest and excitement. Our voyage took us through Easthampton, quiet, old Southampton, the rather important town of Westfield, then to Farmington and Simsbury.

On Sunday afternoon, as the church bells of New Haven

were ringing for service, we drew to our journey's end, after a voyage of seven days from Northampton. I climbed down over the sides of the boat and, grasping my few belongings, took my way through the streets of a new town that, to my limited experience, seemed to be a great city.

My sister Maria lived in a comfortable house situated pleasantly near the harbor. To one side of it was the large house and grounds of Mr. Brewster, a carriage builder, and, on the other side, stood the Tontine Hotel. This was the most important hotel of New Haven, at that day, frequented by guests from all parts of the country.

The change from my country life to the new experiences of a city, even of the size of New Haven, awoke many new interests for a boy of about thirteen years of age. At that time, the city had a population of almost ten thousand people. It was half sea and sound port. Regular steamers came daily from New York. There was a coastwise trade by sailing vessels, and, to farther ports, in the West Indies, South America, as well as a trade across the Atlantic. By its Long Wharf lay numerous brigs and full-rigged ships, loading and unloading merchandise that went to or came from places that were full of romance and imagination for a young boy who wandered about among the casks and bales. The strange noises, the life and movement, all the suggestions of the greater world within reach, that are peculiar to seaports, had a great fascination for me.

During the year of my sojourn at New Haven, I never wearied of wandering about the water front, bathing in the bay, and getting such adventures as my limited opportunities commanded. There was so much that was new. I recall on one occasion, early in my experience, coming upon boiled lobsters for sale, and trying to eat one with very poor success. Practice gave better results at the next attempt. The chances came quite often to row or sail or fish in the harbor or bay.

The family into whose midst my canal boat had floated me

was composed of most friendly people. Maria had a calm, tranquil disposition. She did all the work of her home without any servant. She was not disposed to worry over trifles. She seemed in perfect accord and contentment with her friends and her home. My brother-in-law Allen was a pleasant, genial man, and a very strict Methodist. He was a class leader. My bedroom adjoined the large chamber where, on Saturday evenings, Mr. Allen's flock would assemble. On these occasions, I could not but overhear much that transpired during the exercise of examination and rehearsal of experiences. Then came Mr. Allen's words of advice, consolation, or discipline, and a few hymns would be sung. His face and figure, accentuated by his mode of dress, gave him a very ministerial appearance. In spite of this spiritual aloofness, however, he had two very worldly practices—he loved a pipe and he loved his fiddle. On summer evenings, the wreaths of tobacco smoke floated aloft, as he sat by the house door overlooking his garden, enjoying the pipe and the rest after labor; and, whenever he had a moment's leisure, the clear notes of his violin rang out in old-time folk song or sacred hymn. He was thoroughly good and very much of a gentleman.

My brother George had preceded me to New Haven, and it was through Mr. Allen's friendly help that he became associated with Mr. Sanford. There were two children in the household, Heman and Hester. The older boy, Charles, was at my old home in Northampton. A great advantage to me at New Haven was the society of my brother George. He was established already in Mr. Sanford's employ. About the age of nineteen, he had already made many acquaintances in the town. It was his habit to take supper with us on Sunday evenings.

The most fortunate result of my New Haven year was the school training which I received in the private school of Mr. Thomas. He was the first teacher who ever interested me in my studies. He had the happy faculty of controlling his boys and securing their attention most completely. As a disciplinarian, his

tactfulness rendered police methods unnecessary. It was common for him, on Saturdays, to take the boys who cared to accompany him on expeditions outside of the city, frequently to East or West Rock. As he was very well versed in geology, his accounts of the records written in the fields and hills and river valley gave an educational value to these outings, that, at the same time, were very enjoyable. Not infrequently, a group of ten boys tramped along with him on these trips. He was the only teacher for his school of about twenty-five pupils. His boys were from good families and were well-mannered. Our schoolroom was over a store at the head of Worcester Street. The little knowledge that I ever acquired at school was during this which was to be the last year of my school days. It was, indeed, most fortunate for me that I had this short experience of Mr. Thomas's method of instruction and the influence of his personality.

On Sundays, I attended Mr. Allen's church—the Methodist. It was one of the four churches facing the square, or Green, the others being two Congregational and an Episcopal church. Our pastor was a scholarly man, named Heman Bangs, a member of a prominent family of New York. As an indication of time's changes, I can recall that, in those days, there was only one Roman Catholic church in New Haven. The church edifice was an insignificant frame building, on the outskirts of the town, having a very small congregation. I remember well, on one occasion, witnessing the service from the gallery of this building, and feeling that I was viewing a most dangerous and questionable rite, in the ritual about the altar. We were still in the days when people talked about "Babylon" and "Popish Rites" as being equally dark and wicked, and fraught with danger for the individual soul and the Constitution at Washington. There was, at that time, no Roman Catholic church in Massachusetts west of Worcester.

It was a pleasant year that I spent in New Haven, in the

companionship of my brother George and the agreeable family life of Maria and Mr. Allen. But it all came to an end, and with it another change in my rather changeful existence. I was now fourteen years of age and, unknown to me as yet, my childhood had ended and my long business career was just beginning.

My return up the valley to Northampton was by the stage-coach. We stopped over night at Hartford. This city was slightly larger than New Haven, at that time, having about one thousand more people in its population. It was an important city, having many wholesale houses in all branches of business, and supplying western New England with most of its merchandise; for the local merchants did not then go to New York, but purchased at Hartford. My sketch of the water transportation will indicate the cause for this large body of trade, as Hartford had direct boat communication with New York, and by barge and stage and goods wagon with the interior country along the Connecticut valley, and through the hill country to the west of this valley. Our next day's trip took us through Springfield, and so on to my old home, where Mount Holyoke looks down on the wide meadows.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS LIFE AND WORK

The system of apprenticeship in New England—Entry into business life—Mr. J. H. Butler and his store—Military organizations—Northampton and its people—Old-time phases of life and character in comparison with those of modern life.

Immediately after my return to Northampton, I entered the bookstore of J. H. Butler. The necessary arrangements had been made by my brother William without any consultation with me. I was informed, on my arrival home, that this place was ready for me, and that I was expected to enter in and find pasturage. Thus commenced my long career in the bookseller's trade.

I suppose that certain documents had been executed by William and Mr. Butler, a form of action like an indenture, by which it was arranged that I should receive my board and lodging in Mr. Butler's house, that twenty-five dollars should be my salary for the first year, with an increase of salary by five dollars every second year, until I should become twenty-one years old. Thus, on my last year of service, I would receive forty dollars. In return, I was to serve as junior clerk and perform such other work as Mr. Butler might require. This was the common way in which boys commenced their business careers, in New England, without regard to the social station of the families to which they belonged. The same plan was in vogue in New York. It will be noted that this arrangement was practical and summary. There was an impressive promptness about it. There were no soothing years of academic-athletic repose, with sweet summer vacations, during which the youth could debate whether he would become a doctor, a lawyer, or a thief.

You were then in the hands of your elders; and, by a neat celerity, you made a rapid transition from schoolroom to shop or store.

My work was varied. Being the younger of the two clerks, I was expected to clean the store, carry bundles, either by hand or in the wheelbarrow, make and keep the fires, clean windows, clean the snow from the sidewalks in winter. In short, I did all the work which, in later years, was to be performed by a porter. It was expected, too, that I would run on errands for Mr. Butler's family, but no domestic service was required. In this connection, I recall a long ago afternoon, when I went with Mr. Butler to gather apples in a field far up King Street. I trundled the loaded barrow home, while Mr. Butler stalked in majestic dignity behind me. As we neared home, he remarked, in a casual sort of way, "Well, Theodore, your legs are getting pretty well bowed!" No wonder! for they had borne me up faithfully, with many a heavy load to carry, since early boyhood. I must believe that they tried to serve me well, but, for twenty-five years, they have been useless. The last twenty years of my long life have been lived in an invalid's wheel chair.

I was taken into Mr. Butler's family and became one of the household, occupying a little hall bedroom, with window above the front door of the house. This room I shared with the senior clerk, a burly young man named John Frink. Frink's father was a proprietor of stagecoaches, in partnership with Chester Chapin of Springfield. Their lines of stages ran up and down the Connecticut valley from Hartford to Bellows Falls.

Mrs. Butler was a most estimable lady. She was a daughter of Henry G. Bowers. At the time of my arrival in her home, the only child was a small baby. It is strange that Mrs. Butler should have appeared to me as being very old, for she must have been a young woman, scarcely more than eight years my senior. She took a kind, motherly interest in me, as though I had been a relative instead of her husband's junior clerk. On

Sundays, I went to church as a member of the family, and sat in Mr. Butler's pew.

Mr. J. H. Butler was a man of splendid presence and fine manners. For that period of time, and considering the size of Northampton, he did an extensive business in the publishing and sale of books. Indeed, his house was the most important establishment in this trade, in Massachusetts, outside of the city of Boston. Among his publications were several books by John Todd, which were very popular among church people; also, a pocket polyglot Bible and corresponding Testament. One of his most important books was a volume on the geology of Massachusetts, by Professor Hitchcock of Amherst College. It was a large quarto volume, well illustrated. Professor Hitchcock was the state geologist, and the book was ordered by legislative enactment, the state sharing some of the expenses of its publication.

Our store was the literary center for the cultured people of the circle of towns near Northampton. We had frequent visits from the professors of Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Williston Seminary. The two latter institutions were established during the first years of my service in the store. Miss Mary Lyon would come, almost every week, to consult with Mr. Butler in regard to books on educational subjects. The students from these schools, notably from Amherst College, were our regular customers. At one time, all being in the same college class, I saw frequently Fred Huntington, afterwards a bishop in the Episcopal Church; Richard Storrs, later a prominent Congregational minister; and Theodore Clapp, in after life a distinguished Unitarian. Perhaps I may have sold them books that influenced each one to go a way that both the other two would have considered almost to perdition. I trust, however, that the innocent agent of supply cannot be responsible for the intellectual or spiritual consequences. Possibly, they have learned by this time, in the clearer vision that we hope may belong to the life

after death, that each was not wholly in error. Besides supplying books, we were the agents for the important English and American periodicals. We had, too, a large circulating library, the care of which became one of my special duties. The business was in itself most interesting, and the influences in connection with it all tended to broaden, to educate, and to give a certain culture, perhaps somewhat superficial, to the men engaged in its activities. So the years advanced me on towards manhood, in the association of books and of people who were readers and thinkers.

Mr. Butler was a captain of a very fine-looking and well-uniformed company of infantry. Our town had, also, an artillery company, with two guns and stunning helmets. The combination of patent leather, brass, and lofty red plume, that formed the headgear of its members, would have impressed their foes more than the discharge of their cannon. The guns were the old muzzle-loaders of the period, requiring great agility in swabbing out and ramming down, giving opportunity for much bellowing of orders and dramatic movement. These two military organizations had occasional reviews and parades. It was customary for the manual of arms and general drill to be held on Elm Street, after which there was a parade through the important streets of the town. About this time, a very unpopular law had been passed by the legislature, requiring that every male citizen of Massachusetts between certain ages should do duty in a sort of loosely-organized militia. Failure to do this was punishable by a small tax. Thus was formed a nondescript collection of young men who were not connected with our infantry and artillery companies. This band had no prescribed uniforms, and, therefore, on the day of the annual parade, its members appeared in all sorts of grotesque and absurd costumes. They made a most fantastic appearance, and the intention was to make the muster so ridiculous that the law would be annulled. At the same time, there was a desire to develop all the amusement that

the occasion of annual review offered. It was no sinecure to be the commander of this corps of "rag-shags." I remember that one of our most estimable citizens, a very solemn, mild-mannered, gentle, and inoffensive man, named Enos Parsons, was by some means induced to accept the post of commanding officer. Parsons was elected by the rough company, as a joke, but this he did not realize. His term of office was characterized by absolute disregard for the feelings of the commander, as well as disobedience of all his orders. So unmanageable did his company become, that, on one occasion, when disorder had gone beyond even its usual limit, Parsons was forced to flee from his men and take refuge in a house on a street through which they were rioting.

Northampton has a most beautiful location on the low hills that border a wide extent of meadow. The Connecticut winds through this wonderfully fertile land, forming a great curve on its course southward. The country rises steadily to the west, in range after range of hills, far up to Williamsburg and Chesterfield and the watershed between the Hudson and Connecticut valleys. From the highest summits one looks westward to the heights of Berkshire. On every side of the wide meadow lands, the hills rise in a circling wall of vast extent; while, across the meadows, to eastward, the abrupt heights of Mount Holyoke and the Mount Tom range loom up with an appearance of loftiness in disproportion to their modest altitude of one thousand feet. The lowlands and hills are strewn thickly with villages, their white church spires rising above the verdure of elm trees. Under its rich cultivation the meadow looks like a carpet of intricate pattern, and farms dot the hillsides. It is an old land, long ago settled by English immigrants, and by the children of earlier settlers who migrated from eastern to western New England in the early colonial period. So it was in my boyhood, and so its natural scenery remains to the present day.

I believe that Northampton was considered to be one of the most attractive communities in our state, not alone for its fine

setting, but also on account of a certain refinement and culture found among a very large circle of its inhabitants. Indeed, we rather felt that, in these respects, we had the same relation to western Massachusetts that Boston held to the salt water end of the state.

The leading lawyers of the town were Isaac C. Bates, afterwards associated with Daniel Webster in the Senate at Washington; Charles E. Forbes, founder of the Forbes Library; Charles A. Dewey, at one time judge of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts; Charles P. Huntington, a brother of Bishop Huntington, one of the ablest lawyers of the state; and Lewis Strong, son of Caleb Strong, the latter, a governor of Massachusetts.

I went to the Court House very often, during term, to hear Forbes or Bates examine witnesses or address the jury. There was a stately formality about the conduct of trials and the functions of the court that is entirely lost, in our busy days. During the sessions of court, lawyers from various towns of Hampshire County, as well as from the whole state, assembled in Northampton. Their headquarters were at Warner's Coffee House, on Main Street. Thither they marched in a body to dinner, and from here, headed by the high sheriff of the county, Judge Lyman, they marched each morning down to the Court House. Dinner was an enjoyable affair, presided over by the acting judge, and rendered famous by the men of talent present, whose witty remarks and apt repartee enlivened these occasions. Those old times belonged to a still older period, when personal presence, stately manners, and the charm of oratory were much cultivated, and counted greatly in court house or legislative chamber.

The medical profession was well represented in our town by Dr. Austin Flint, whose distinguished son and grandson became physicians of New York City, Dr. Benjamin Barrett, Drs. Daniel and James Thompson, Dr. Edward E. Deniston, Dr. Hall, Dr. Sieger, and Dr. David Hunt. The two last named were perhaps the most individual, as well as among the ablest physicians of

the group. Sieger was an eccentric German, who built a large tomb in his garden, whether for himself or for the convenience of his patients I am unable to report. Hunt, a keen-minded medical man, was decidedly peculiar in his manners. It was an age when the use of strong liquors was almost universal. Even clergymen, in making parochial calls, drank rum, toddy, and strong cider to a degree that, to put it mildly, showed poor judgment of the fitness of things. Dr. Hunt was fond of a little "stimulant," upon occasions, and then showed the evidence of over-indulgence. He was our ablest and most trusted medical adviser, however, and had a large following of loyal patients. It was his custom to ride about the country, in the pursuit of his calling, on a large, strong horse. More often than not, his long, thick hair was his only head-covering. There was something primeval and militant about the man, a sort of medical druid and dragoon combined into a priest of nature. On one occasion he had attended a case of illness in the neighboring village of Hadley. Perhaps it had been a long, hard, all-night struggle with death; and the doctor had that sense of triumph and exhilaration that every physician knows will set the heart in a glow, although it may be his only reward for hard service. For the real physician, it suffices to have won a hard-fought contest with disease and death. True, the world does not see his crown; but he himself feels upon his care-lined brows the pressure of a victor's laurel wreath, and a voice, unheard by the world, is musical to his conscience, with words of praise. I do not know the circumstances of Hunt's triumphal entry, but, at all events, on this morning, his strong horse bore him into town with a long branch of a tree tied to its tail and trailing the road behind. Hunt, erect in the saddle, his long hair streaming in the wind, rode proudly up the center of Main Street. Thus he appeared, like a vision of wrath, to Parson Williams, who for fifty years had gone in and out among his people as pastor of the Old Church. In a moment, Parson Williams was in the

roadway, facing the scandalous spectacle. With gaunt arms extended to stop the physician in his glorious progress, he cried, "Oh, David! David! I thought you had sowed your wild oats!" "So I have, Parson," came in reply; "now I'm harrowing them in!" Our other medical men were of the quiet, conventional type.

From this review of our professional men it will be seen that these citizens, with their families, and with the teachers and educated laymen of the town, formed an interesting community.

Most of our business men were dignified in manner, and quite as intelligent, to say the least, as any of their class in later years.

Among the farmers and mechanics there was an unusual number of readers and thinkers who were able to converse intelligently and with force on questions of politics, theology, and the current events of the day which affected local and national affairs. They all came to our store, bought books, and talked entertainingly about their reading.

There was a general diffusion of a certain superficial culture, in a large community of intelligent, thinking people. Of course, there was a small inner circle of educated men and women. I think that the peculiarity of that time, in comparison with later years, was a certain tone of sincerity and self-respect that was very marked in our social life. Our simple ideals of living made it unnecessary to assume an external gloss that did not belong to our everyday existence. The butcher, baker, and candlestick maker, the physician, minister, teacher, and lawyer, the tradesman and storekeeper, were simply what they were, and not a bit ashamed of the fact. We were not imitators of foreign ways, but had developed our own social system by a natural evolution peculiar to our environment. Standards of life had not been accepted, as yet, from the fancied social conditions of the Old World, done into fiction and the drama so that everybody could read and see. Men of wealth lived with simple dignity. They

would have been laughed out of the county had they made pretense to an imitation of the life of a nobleman of England or the continent. One dealt, more usually than now, directly with the man himself, not with a mask. As the women in all classes of society had few or no servants, they had less time than in later years to develop a social system of much complexity, which their weak and admiring husbands must follow, thinking it all very wonderful, but an awful bore. The women of that day established the splendid standard of American womanhood that is a tradition now. But so firmly did they impress their influence on the home and on their children, that, even to this day, the influence made by their busy lives and clear, sympathetic minds on their men and times gives a reputation to modern American women for qualities that belong really to their grandmothers.

I have indicated the woman's importance in my brief references to the homes of my sisters; yet such homes were common throughout New England. But these people were not common in the sense that the word would be used to-day. They were the representatives of a sterling, self-respecting middle class, descendants of old English yeomanry. The political boss could not even develop among these aggressive and self-sufficient men and women. The style of local government was the town meeting and its resulting election of selectmen, who were the direct choice of the citizens. True, the faults and vices of our later political development were in embryo. Political graft, contractor-bossism, the professional politician, and voting bummer were all potentialities, and, doubtless, in the larger cities, were beginning to bloom into what would become the rank and weedy luxuriance of to-day. But, in the country districts and small towns, the average citizen was too alert and independent to tolerate any "organization" politics.

I must not idealize those times, however, beyond a fair estimate. It was not the "golden age." We rather enjoyed hearing the Ten Commandments read, and felt the need of their applica-

tion to the lives of our neighbors. As a code of human conduct, with the thunders of a divine sanction, we esteemed them highly, but we broke them every day. Doubtless, sinfulness and saintliness in men's lives have kept on a certain general average of manifestation throughout the ages; but there have been periods and places in which the sinner has been more at his ease than he could be in other times and localities. In the New England of the early nineteenth century there were very few saints, but conditions of education, secular and religious, the very temperament of the common people, tended to discourage the evil doer. He was not so much in evidence, in high as well as low estate, as he is to-day. Then, too, human life was valued more highly. Murder and suicide, so frequent with us, then were committed rarely. Dishonest finance was not regarded with toleration; nor were its recognized promoters smiled upon and treated as friends by the representative men of the community.

CHAPTER IV

YOUTH

Advance in business—Holidays in New England—The social life of young people—Mary Wright—Completion of apprenticeship with J. H. Butler.

When John Frink left Mr. Butler's store I had reached the age of seventeen, and was advanced to the position of senior clerk. My place was filled by a new junior. It was a very important step upwards in my business life. I had charge of the bookkeeping and the cash, and was the general factotum of the establishment. As Mr. Butler was away frequently making purchases, I had most of the business of the store on my hands, as manager. I fell heir, also, to John Frink's office of clerk of the Torrent Hose Company. The fire defenders of Northampton were two hose companies, named respectively the Deluge and the Torrent. Augustus Clark was foreman of the Torrent. On summer evenings, we assembled on Main Street for practice and a contest to prove which company could send the longest stream of water from its pump, worked by hand.

We had no such flurry of business activity as marks the Christmas holiday season in these times. In the New England of that day Christmas was hardly recognized by any one as a holiday.

New Year's was the day for an exchange of presents, and for calling on one's friends with the season's greeting.

The next important holiday came in April, when Fast Day was observed. This day was appointed by the governor of the state, as it had been in Massachusetts from the times of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. Services were held in the church on Fast Day morning, and a sermon was preached. My relatives and acquaintances were strict observers of the day, and we fasted

literally, having very simple and cold viands on our tables. No work was done, and the stores were closed.

Fourth of July had its present day importance. As a boy, I joined with my comrades, and we spent the preceding night in a barn, often out in the meadows, so as to be up and at it with the earliest signals of the dawn. On some years there would be a public meeting, with orations, held on Main Street, before the Old Church. But the regular event of the day was a picnic, either in the woods on Round Hill, or in some pleasant grove. This was under the management of the principal ladies of the town. Tables were arranged for refreshments, and, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the society of Northampton began to assemble. Among the guests would be many of the towns-people who had moved away to other homes, young men from the cities, returning to Northampton on this occasion to renew old associations. The afternoon passed delightfully, under the shade of the woods, in pleasant conversation. In the evening, a ball, patronized by the best people in the town, was held in a hall on Round Hill that had belonged to a school, at one time, and was a part of a hotel opened for summer guests. This was perhaps the most important social event of the year. It was continued long after my time into the days of later generations. The music of the dance floated away on the still, soft air of the summer night. Young hearts were happy and young eyes were sparkling, and words of love found an answering fervor. So it was to be through the years, until the grandchildren of my gay companions would hear the music and feel the joys of living. For them, as for us, the moon would fill the night with its beauty, its silver haze revealing the town below amid its elms, the mystic spaces of the meadows, and the loom of Mount Holyoke under a purple sky sparkling with stars.

Another important holiday came in early September, before the leaves fell, while the trees were brilliant with their autumn colors. This was Cattle Show, when people from all parts of

Hampshire County flocked into Northampton. Along Main Street, from the Old Church down to King Street, in front of the old Town Hall, and extending up King Street itself, pens for animals were erected, counters built for the sale of refreshments, and spaces set aside for mild sorts of shows. In the Town Hall there would be a display of vegetables and fruit. The largest apples, pumpkins, and other strange overgrowths, that had served for the admiration of a farmer's neighborhood, would now be placed where the world could see and wonder. Besides these natural products, embroideries, fine needlework, and the exhibition pieces of different tradesmen would be displayed. Prizes were given for the best farm stock and farm products.

Soon after Cattle Show had had its day came the day for the general muster of the military of the town and county, which was held on what we called "Pancake Plain." This was near the grounds now occupied by the hospital for the insane. It was a great day for the people. Our own local companies then joined the other units to which they belonged, and which came marching in from the neighboring towns, and formed up for review. The equipments of the troops were inspected, then came a drill and some simple military evolutions. About the parade grounds were tents for refreshments, and crowds of people wandered over the place all day long, until towards evening the various companies marched away, back to their homes. I remember that the commanding general in my days was a handsome man and good rider, named Gen. W. H. Moseley.

Thanksgiving Day came on the last Thursday of November. Its actual appointment was by the proclamation of the governor; but from time immemorial it came on this special Thursday. In my early life, and long afterwards, the observance of this day was peculiar to New England. Until the Civil War, it had never been recognized beyond the states of Yankeeland. President Lincoln, in the storm and stress of war time, called urgently on the people of all the Northern states to observe this solemn occa-

sion, and since then it has been a national day of thanksgiving. In my time, the day was marked by a morning service in the church, at which a sermon or address on a secular or political subject was delivered from the pulpit. The choir sang a program that differed from the usual hymns of Sunday, and was arranged for the thanksgiving occasion. After the church service came as luxurious a dinner as could be provided by each family of the town, to which the exiles from home returned, the sons who had established themselves in business in outside towns or cities, the daughters who had left the parental rooftree for homes of their own. It was the day for family reunions in the old homesteads.

The years were bringing me on towards manhood. My contact with many people and residence in Mr. Butler's family brought me into friendly relations with an increasingly large circle of acquaintances. I had few opportunities, however, for the social phases of life, because, like all the clerks of the town, I was busy from six o'clock in the morning until the bell on the Old Church rang at nine o'clock in the evening. This was the signal for the closure of shop or store. Until that hour work continued. A rigid rule in Mr. Butler's house required that his clerks should be in bed at ten o'clock. Thus our evening's freedom was limited to one hour. This we clerks passed in friendly gatherings, usually in the watch and jewelry store of Mr. Cook. There was a general understanding that Mr. Cook would not object to having his clerks play host in his establishment. On summer evenings we strolled about the streets, visiting the taverns. When, however, I attained the position of senior clerk in Mr. Butler's store, I broke his rule of bedtime at ten o'clock. I am aware that this annoyed him, but he yielded to my rebellious independence and never said a word to me on the subject. His tacit assent to my unexpressed claim for this degree of freedom is one, among other indications, that my employer was satisfied with the attention that I gave to his business. And yet, so char-

acteristic of New England reserve, he never gave the slightest verbal expression of praise or satisfaction; nor did I receive from Mr. Butler, during my long term of service with him, any present or one penny more than the small sums agreed on with my brother as my salary. We gave and took no praise in those days. It was a cold-blooded attitude of mind, but as wholesome and sound in effect as our keen, cold winds of winter. It encouraged activity. It kept one on the jump. There was no anxiety in our minds that we might be pleasing any one too much.

I had never had any friendships among girls, but, about this time of my life, I began to have acquaintances among the young ladies of the town. I remember that a dancing class was organized by the young men, so arranged that we shared the necessary expenses among us for the salary of a teacher of the art, the hire of a hall, its proper care, and other matters connected with the classes. It was incumbent on each member to invite a young lady to the class meetings, and this invitation was expected to be for the whole season. I belonged to the class, but I had no available young lady, so I bethought me of a very attractive girl, whom I had seen frequently, but to whom I had never had any formal introduction. She was bright, pretty, rosy-cheeked, with curling brown hair and brown eyes. It seemed to me no impropriety to go to this young lady's home and invite her to be my partner for the season. There was certainly no want of directness about such an application for the privilege of becoming her knight. During all that winter, we danced together and were good comrades. I refer to this episode as illustrative of the amazing degree of freedom, in those days, in the social intercourse between young people. The office of chaperon would not have been understood; and the reason for this was the excellent character of the young women themselves. I doubt if men's standards of morality vary so greatly among the people of different times and races. The women have these matters under their entire control, and they set the standards of virtue. It was

certainly a very high standard in the New England of my young manhood.

When I had about reached the age of nineteen years I became acquainted with Mary Wright. This girl, with her blue eyes and fair complexion, had a manner so cordial and frank that she was a general favorite with the young women as well as with the young men of our best families. She had attracted my respectful attention on the street, and on the occasions when she visited our store for purchases. It seems very strange to me, now, that I cannot recall how or when I became intimate with her, or began to be one of the visitors at her home. She belonged to an old family of Northampton, whose residence was in a very ancient dwelling, the oldest house in the town, on Bridge Street. Strangely, one of my ancestors, Cornet Joseph Parsons, had built this house in 1655, about the time of his marriage to an ancestress of mine, Mary Bliss of Springfield. My opportunities for cultivating any friendship with a young lady were very limited; but, on Sunday evenings, Mary Wright and her sister Anna received many visitors. It was a musical evening. Mary sang soprano and her sister, alto. Anna played the accompaniment on a quaint old piano, one of the earliest styles of this instrument, and a group of young men and girls gathered about and sang music that was very attractive to one, at least, of their hearers. These were the sweet old sentimental songs of Tom Moore, older ballads, and melodies long ago forgotten, except as they live in memory, and in the hearts of the very few men and women now living who heard them in that far-off youth. It was a great pleasure to me to listen to this music, but I had no voice for singing or knowledge of the art, and therefore was not of the group about the piano. For this reason, perhaps, the scene is impressed all the more vividly on my recollection—the ancient, low-ceiled room, with its simple old-time furniture; the play of light and shade from the lamplight on young, fresh faces; the

melody of old-fashioned music to the words of that quaint, sentimental poetry of a past century.

Singing classes were held in the Town Hall, and after the store was closed at nine o'clock in the evening, I would join the audience in the Hall and accompany the Misses Wright back to their home. My intimacy with Mary Wright continued for several months, until a year had passed, and the other young men of our circle began to recognize the fact that I was rather entitled to more of Mary's attention than they could hope for. We were together always on social occasions. Together we drove through the beautiful land about our home, down by the river, under Mount Holyoke, through the meadows, along old stage roads that ran from village to village, each with its wide common and elm-shaded street. From rocky, narrow roads in the hill country we looked down on the wide spaces of the meadow land and broad sweep of the Connecticut, with the circling hills, from where Mount Toby lifts its flattened summit, near Sunderland, to the heights above far-off Southampton. My opportunities for these excursions were of necessity very infrequent, owing to the requirements of business, but holidays came, as I have described, at such intervals that we could journey together through the season of spring blossoms, could view the leafy foliage of summer and the changing tints of autumn, until the leaves fell and winter gave its chances for sleigh rides and skating. This intimacy and close association could be understood by us and our neighbors to indicate one fact alone, that we were engaged, and expected to become man and wife.

I had now reached the years of manhood. When I was twenty-one years old my relations with Mr. Butler would cease. But my old employer was not willing to part from me, as he had done with his other clerks, when the term of apprenticeship had ended. He urged me to remain with him for eight months longer, agreeing to give me a salary at the rate of five hundred dollars per year. I was glad to accept his proposal, as this money

enabled me to pay off all the debts that I had contracted, except one obligation of some importance. Mr. Butler obtained an offer for my services, after I should leave him, from the prominent publishing house of Little & Brown of Boston. I had, however, the offer of another position from his brother, Mr. E. H. Butler, a publisher and bookseller of Philadelphia. The latter had taken very recently as his partner a Mr. Williams, who was the son of Mr. Eliphalet Williams, for nearly fifty years the president of the old Northampton Bank. His only son had been educated in Europe. The young man was of striking figure, athletic, tall, a splendid-looking man. He had studied medicine and graduated as a physician, but was entirely lacking in any business training. E. H. Butler, when a young man, had been connected with the firm of William Marshall & Company, but the head of the house failed in business. Soon after this event Mr. Marshall died, and if the debts of the old firm could be paid off or compromised, E. H. Butler would have the opportunity to reorganize the house and continue its affairs. This he had been successful in doing, and now, as capital was needed, Mr. Butler was glad to associate the son of a wealthy banker in his new undertaking. So young Williams entered the firm as a partner, with money supplied by his father, and the publishing house of Butler & Williams of Philadelphia was started. I concluded to accept the offer of a position in this company.

I was now brought face to face with a very painful situation. My debts were all paid, with one important exception. I had absolutely no capital or financial backing. The opportunity of a career was before me, but I must win success by my own efforts alone. How could I ask Mary to share this uncertain future? How could I ask her to wait for me through, perhaps, an uncertain length of years, until I was in position to give her a home? Her character and personal appearance were such that many opportunities for a really brilliant marriage might be presented by men well worthy of her trust and affection. What right had

I to stand in their way by binding her to an agreement which the uncertainties of life might never permit to be fulfilled? Considering these circumstances, I adopted a line of action that seemed to me the only honorable one. I told Mary the crisis that had arisen in our lives. I told her that we must break off all association together that could in any way curtail her absolute freedom of choice in regard to matrimony. Perhaps it was a cruel thing to do. I could see no other way that was at the same time just and honorable.

And so we parted. And so ended the days of my romance and of my youth. Before me, in the years that were coming, was a man's work to do in the competitions and conflicts of business life, where he is wise who counts neither on a fair field nor favor. Yet he should be deemed fortunate who enters the contest with a conscience so trained by the association of early years that he can distinguish the just from the unjust act, and whose fortitude will enable him to shun all paths, however alluring, in which this inner light will refuse to be his guide.

CHAPTER V

MANHOOD

Journey to Philadelphia—Entrance into store of Butler & Williams—The store and its business—Making "annuals"—Philadelphia in the years about 1844—Methods of business—Difficult currency—Transportation—Law and order in Philadelphia—Volunteer fire companies—Street fights and rioting—Consolidation of the various districts into one city.

I went to Philadelphia in April of 1844. The railroad had been built gradually in sections from Boston, first to Worcester, then to Springfield, and finally to New Haven. From there passengers took a day or night steamer to New York by Long Island Sound. Lines of stages ran through the thickly-settled country between New Haven and the metropolis, but the water route was in every way to be preferred. The development of railroads had advanced to a degree of obtaining a speed of twenty miles an hour. This was the standard speed, and remained so for many years after my journey by rail to New Haven. Delays in travel were frequent, as the railroad lines were built on a single track system, with turn-outs and side tracking for trains to meet and pass in different directions. Water tanks came at frequent intervals. All these caused much delay, added to the slow speed of twenty miles an hour.

Arriving at New York by steamboat, I took the route for Philadelphia, starting from Amboy, reached by boat from New York. From Amboy the railroad went to Trenton and thence to Camden. This was an advance over the older route to Burlington, New Jersey, from which point one had to take a boat on the Delaware to Philadelphia. The line was extended, at last, across the Delaware River from Trenton, and then came by the Pennsylvania bank of the river to Kensington. Here the pas-

sengers were landed in a wretched shed of a station, and had to make their way by a long journey, in cabs or omnibuses or coaches, into the distant center of Philadelphia. The railroad journey across New Jersey to Camden required about five hours for transit.

On my arrival in Philadelphia I reported immediately at the store of Butler & Williams, on the northwestern corner of Merchant and Fourth streets. Mr. Butler recommended me to a comfortable house on Spruce Street, where I could obtain a good room and board. This was a pleasant home, kept by a widow with a family of two sons and two daughters. Her father-in-law, a fine old gentleman, was also a member of the family. The house was either the second or third one on the south side of Spruce Street, east of Third Street.

The change from the life of a New England town, where my family had lived for many generations, to the bustle and activity of a large, important city in which I was a stranger without acquaintances, would have affected me more than was the case had I not been required to enter at once into the work of my new position.

Butler & Williams employed a junior clerk, a lad of about eighteen years of age. They had also a porter for the heavy work of lifting, packing, and cleaning the store. As senior clerk I was, in reality, manager of the store and its business. I kept the books of the firm, attended to sales, renewed the stock as needed, and made "exchanges" with other book houses of such stock as we did not need for the goods that were required. Mr. Butler attended to financing the company, and Mr. Williams served as a beautiful adornment, his graceful form occupying a comfortable chair in the countingroom, when its owner did not need it for his personal uses.

Our store occupied three stories of the small building on Merchant Street. On the first floor was the salesroom, where I held sway. The second floor was used partly for storage and

for the offices of the company. On the third floor resided an interesting character who had a close connection with our business. Dr. Reynolds Coates was a genial man of letters, fond of the good things of life, in the inexpensive and unostentatious ways of the times. One could entertain friends, then, without ordering a Roman feast in the palatial dining room of a millionaire's hotel or club. Philadelphia had many restaurants and taverns, which the best business men frequented, alone or with friends, sitting down at a small wooden table, with very plain cloth and napkins. More often than not the floor was bare, except for a layer of clean bar sand scattered over it. Amid these plain surroundings, however, you found a very high degree of the art of cooking applied to the best of materials, in delicious oysters, terrapin, poultry and game, and, as an accompaniment, a mug or more of that excellent Philadelphia cream ale, that was famous all over the country. Men arriving in town after long journeys, before inquiring for anything else, asked for Philadelphia cream ale, with a click of thirst in the tones of their voices. Dr. Reynolds Coates, the resident of our third story, lived pleasantly on the local advantages, sometimes more well than wisely. His rooms were the general meeting place for a number of literary men of the day, among them Thomas Buchanan Reed, Henry Hirst, and George H. Boker.

Among Mr. Butler's publications, no class of books gave him more personal interest than the issue of "annuals." No one would look at them to-day. The book reviewers of every newspaper would hold them up to ridicule and scorn; but, in that middle period of the nineteenth century, our "annuals" found an enthusiastic reception. They appeared in December, and were intended as gift books for the holiday trade of Christmas and New Year's. In building up an "annual," the first requirement was to select a number of attractive pictures, then to find, or have written, poems, prose sketches, and simply-composed essays that would suit these illustrations. It was a work of skill, to

attach the text to the picture, so that there would be a good match and no strained relations. In this work Mr. Butler delighted, and his adviser and co-worker was that genial literary man, Dr. Reynolds Coates. In fact, Coates wrote many of the sketches, when nothing available could be found as a reprint or contribution. Reed, Hirst, and Boker supplied poems and bits of prose writing. During the years of my association with Mr. Butler the annuals increased from one or two, issued yearly, to six books, all having a very fair degree of popularity. They were illustrated with steel engravings made by John Sartain. The printing was in clear, handsome type on smooth, heavy paper. One of the chief features of the volumes was the binding, in which wreaths of flowers and vines and trellises, with birds and cherubs, were stamped in gilt on a solid ground of different shades of colors. The names of the "annuals" were "Friendship's Offering," "Leaflets of Memory," "Christian Keepsake," "Christmas Blossoms," "The Snowflake," and "Boudoir Annual." The very names are suggestive of a certain romance and sentiment, in the current literature of a time differing so greatly from the present, that it seems to belong to a remote age and different civilization. These books, the joint efforts of Dr. Coates and his coterie of authors and Mr. Butler, with occasional help from his partner, Williams, had a very active sale, but our business depended more upon certain educational books and a general trade of a miscellaneous character.

✓ It was necessary for me to conduct book exchanges with other houses in the book business. By this means we renewed our stock without direct expenditure of capital. Another firm might want the very volumes which we were glad to remove from our shelves, while we needed books that the other firm could not use. Thus exchange was a very important phase of our business.

Philadelphia at that time, in the years about 1844, was a city of about three hundred thousand inhabitants. Its limits were

between the southern side of Vine Street and the northern side of South Street, and it extended between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. West of the Schuylkill, in that great area of the city now called West Philadelphia, there was nothing but open country. I have often crossed the Market Street bridge to a quiet, unpaved road, heavily shaded, on the Schuylkill's west bank. Following this pleasant country lane, past fields and groves, I would return to town by the suspension bridge at Fairmount. West of Broad Street the city was unpaved, and houses, singly or in groups, stood at intervals, with many open lots between.

The importance of the city's exports was shown by its crowded water front on the Delaware. From Vine Street to South Street the wharves were crowded with ships of every rig. Delays in unloading were frequent, owing to the number of vessels, and ships had to lie at anchor in the stream, waiting for places at the wharves. The great bowsprits stretched out over the parapet on Delaware Avenue in a long perspective of picturesque angles, and a great variety of figureheads looked down on the busy shore line from the high prows. Delaware Avenue presented an animated spectacle, with the transportation of goods to and from the crowded wharves, and the noise and movement attending the loading and unloading of ships. Cope Brothers had a line of packets, with sailings weekly, to Liverpool. There was a large trade with the West Indies, mostly in the hands of John and S. and W. Welsh. Robert Bliss, afterwards Bliss & Dallett, had consignments to and from the West Indies and South American ports. As yet no coal was shipped from Philadelphia. Indeed, almost none was used. Wood was used very generally as fuel. The price charged for anthracite coal and wood was about the same sum, three dollars and fifty cents per ton. Methods of trade were quite different from those of later years. With few exceptions, manufacturers consigned their goods to commission houses. These sold to the jobber, or

wholesale dealer, and he supplied the retail trade from which the consumer purchased. Immense amounts of goods were sold by auction, the chief house for miscellaneous merchandise being Meyer & Claghorn; but there were many other auctioneers, confining their sales to special classes of goods.

It would be impossible for a business man now to realize the annoyance and loss that we suffered from the system of currency then in vogue. It was long before the "greenback" and national banks had been instituted. We depended upon so-called state banks and private banks. Any individual or group of individuals could organize such banks, and there was no government inspection. The notes of such banks were badly printed on poor paper, and counterfeiting was so common that a note had to be most carefully scrutinized. Even with the greatest care the counterfeits were passed again and again and continued in circulation. Unless a bank was noted for its stability, and was careful to keep its notes at par value, they suffered a large depreciation when presented at points remote from the bank of issue. A thousand dollars in currency might vary from one half to ten per cent. in the loss by discount. Bankers would accept only bankable funds. It was necessary, on receipt of these notes from customers, scattered all over the country, that they should be taken to a broker and sold for what value he would put on them; then the deposit in bank could be made. The banking house of Drexel & Company began its business in the negotiation of these notes. There were a few banks, in good credit with our city banks, whose notes were kept at par. These were rare institutions. The banks of some states had a worse reputation than those of others. Indiana was especially weak in the credit of its state and private banks. Kentucky was in almost as low esteem. In fact, all the Southern states were regarded with distrust in this connection. There was no general clearing house, and no express company for the transportation and collection of notes. When Adams' or Harnden's express companies

were started in Boston, in a very small way, they undertook this business, conveying the notes in sealed packages for collection.

Transportation was then in its infancy. Between the cities, by means of great goods wagons, merchandise was carried along the pike roads from city to city. Great lumbering Conestoga wagons, drawn by four or six horses, toiled westward from Philadelphia on the long, tedious journey across the state and over the Alleghanies to Pittsburgh. To Southern cities the exports went mostly by vessels, going to various ports. Frequently goods were shipped thus to New Orleans, then reshipped to Mississippi steamers, which took them to St. Louis and interior towns. Again, they might be transshipped to smaller steamers for ascent of the Ohio to Cincinnati or Pittsburgh. Merchants from the South and West spent many months in Philadelphia making annual purchases. They were well aware that the goods thus bought would be months in transit before reaching the distant homes of the purchasers. Meanwhile, the visiting merchants obtained what amusement they could out of the sojourn in our town. It was incumbent on their friends living here to see that the time was not too dull in passing; otherwise, the trader might go to New York or Baltimore, where entertainment, if not prices, would be more to his satisfaction.

Later on, the railroads began their wonderful development. But, even then, Market Street was unpleasantly blocked with long trains of freight cars, drawn through the street by strings of mules to the freight station at Thirteenth Street or the passenger station at Eleventh Street. Before this time, however, Market Street, from Second Street to Eleventh, was narrowed greatly by the series of market houses which occupied the center of the street through this important business district.

Transportation by means of canals never attained its full development, although by this method of transport we did send goods up into interior towns of Pennsylvania and across New Jersey.

Transit for local passengers through our streets was carried on by means of heavy omnibuses and coaches, that rattled over the cobblestones in a slow and painful progress. After my coming many years elapsed before the introduction of tracks and street cars.

There was no postal delivery. A private enterprise, known as Blood's Penny Post, carried on a local business, which, of course, ended when the Post Office undertook this service. At the time of my arrival the Post Office was located in the Exchange Building, at Third and Dock streets.

Firms engaged in wholesale business were found east of Seventh Street on Market Street, and east of Third Street on Chestnut. Many such were found, also, on Front Street, Water Street, and Delaware Avenue.

Second Street was the great shopping thoroughfare for all retail business, extending as far north as Vine Street.

Where, to-day, a nondescript collection of Jews, Italians, Greeks, and immigrants from southeastern Europe crowd the overfilled dwellings, amid inferior boarding and lodging houses, business offices, and miscellaneous small stores, the socially elect of Philadelphia had their homes. Third and Fourth streets, between Walnut and Pine, were important streets for residence. This was true also of Walnut, Spruce, and Pine streets, east of Eighth Street. Already, the course of this society element was tending westward into new homes that were being erected on all these streets, towards the regions that, years later, would center about Rittenhouse Square.

Outside of the old city limits lay a number of independent communities that had grown to such an extent as to border upon one another and the city itself in masses of closely-built streets. To the north lay the districts of Spring Garden, Penn Township, Northern Liberties, Francisville, Kensington, Richmond, and Frankford, with the more distant communities of Germantown and Chestnut Hill. South of the city's southern limit lay Southwark, Moyamensing, and Passayunk.

Although Philadelphia had a well-organized and efficiently-executed government, the size, nearness, and local prejudices of these surrounding districts, each with its own government, rendered outbreaks of disorder not infrequent. The companies of volunteer firemen, of the city itself and of these separate localities, maintained a spirit of rivalry and ill will towards one another that tended to disturb the peace of the various communities. In the neighborhood of every fire company's headquarters popular feeling, among the rougher element of the citizens, supported the ambition of the local firemen to be cocks of the walk, in fighting their fellow men as well as the fiery element itself. This rivalry continued for many years, even after the consolidation of the various districts with the city of Philadelphia. The small boys all over the town assumed a self-appointed membership, at least in enthusiasm, in the different companies. A little tough of nine years or more would attack another little ruffian of corresponding age, because the former belonged to the "Good Will" and the latter to "Spring Garden." Gangs of these youthful savages organized "stone fights" against their enemies of another fire persuasion, and made life miserable for the citizens in the area of the scene of battle. Almost every fire call was a signal for a race to the burning house, between rival companies, and a free fight on the way, or on the return to quarters. It is impossible to realize now how much discomfort and damage was caused to the citizens by these volunteer fire fighters. Indeed, it has been stated by persons whose sources of information appeared to be reliable, that many buildings were set on fire by members of these companies, or their friends, for the sake of a little diversion, when times proved to be dull, or for more sinister motives. All this ended when the firemen were organized as a part of the city government, on the same status as the police force.

I had been a citizen of Philadelphia for a few months only, when a serious outbreak against the Roman Catholics caused a

great loss to several parishes of this church. It was believed, at the time, that members of many of the volunteer fire companies, together with the "Know-Nothing" Party, organized these attacks. I remember going with an acquaintance through the streets, crowded with excited and disorderly people, to see the burning of St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church, on Fourth Street above Race. In order to protect St. Mary's, on Fourth Street below Walnut, and St. Joseph's, in Willings Alley, the authorities closed Fourth Street by ropes and barricades, between Walnut and Spruce streets, allowing only residents of this square to pass through the lines. I found that Penn's "green country town" was far from being entirely under the influence of the peaceful Society of Friends.

My close application to business developed many acquaintances among the members of the publishing and bookselling trade, but I did not make many social friendships. One reason for my avoidance of society was the memory of a sweet girl in far Northampton. She was always in my thoughts, although no letters passed between us, and, on the few occasions when I visited my old home, we never met. Before returning to Philadelphia, on those infrequent and brief visits to Northampton, I never failed to walk out Bridge Street and see the cozy little old house, shaded with elms, where Mary lived. It was a very wretched, heartsick man that, each time, turned away and took the long journey back to Philadelphia. I had willed to break away from her life. The thought has come to me, in later years, that I may have been wrong; that perhaps, believing that my action was designed for her interest alone, there may have been some subtle element of selfishness, a fear of incumbrance, a hesitation at assuming responsibilities. It is possible, that women sometimes may not desire a freedom so firmly offered that it might appear like an ultimatum. A gentler nature than mine might have seen the situation in a very different light.

My evenings, when not spent alone in my room, were apt to be

passed at one of the theatres. The Walnut Street Theatre in those days had an excellent stock company. There I saw Forrest and the elder Booth. The stage was well represented, also, at the Arch Street Theatre, by a company managed by John Drew, and in which his talented wife took an active part. Occasionally I went off for an afternoon outing with some acquaintances. We rowed up the Schuylkill to the Falls Village, and had an excellent supper, at a waterside inn, on catfish, waffles, and coffee. These trips were varied by excursions up or down the Delaware, or to Germantown and Chestnut Hill.

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPMENT OF A BUSINESS CAREER

Leaves the firm of Butler & Williams to establish an independent business—Joins E. H. Butler as a partner—An example of sale methods of the time—Success in business—Marriage—Establishment of a home in Philadelphia—Separates from E. H. Butler and establishes a new firm, with an acquaintance as partner—Strange experience in this connection—Business methods of the day and a description of the book trade—Trade sales.

I had been in Mr. E. H. Butler's store during two years of very active work, when his partner, Mr. Williams, died suddenly from a violent fever. After this event, my employer decided to confine his business to the sale of his own publications. This presented an opportunity to me that I had been considering for several months. I told Mr. Butler that, by this change in his business, he could well do without my services; that, in fact, there would be little for me to do, and that I proposed to organize a store for myself. With his consent, I would take certain customers of his, whose business required that they should purchase from a general wholesaler. I told him that I had found a room already in which to begin my venture. This was in the second story of a building on the south side of Market Street, below Sixth Street. Mr. Butler assented immediately to my proposal in regard to his customers. I engaged the oldest son of my landlady, James Thackara, as clerk, laid in my stock, sent out circulars and solicitations for orders to old customers of Butler & Williams in Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, and through Pennsylvania, and also to schools. In a very short time I began to develop a very promising trade.

Four months had elapsed since this rather hustling beginning

of an independent career, when Mr. E. H. Butler walked into my store and said, "Bliss, I want you to give up this business and come back with me. I offer you a partnership with me on the same terms as given to Mr. Williams. Your interest in the business will be one third. You will need ten thousand dollars' capital, which you can borrow easily from your brother, George Bliss." I saw at once that it would be well to comply with his request. Indeed, I knew exactly the position in which he had been placed. When Mr. Butler reduced his trade to the sale of his own publications, he was limited to certain books, mostly of an educational character. Among these his most valuable book was a series of Smith's "Grammars." The publication of these books he shared with a certain E. Trueman of Cincinnati. There were duplicate sets of stereotype plates, each publisher owning his own set. Between Mr. Butler and Trueman there was a tacit agreement, but in no way legally binding, that Mr. Butler would confine his sales to the Eastern cities and towns, while Mr. Trueman would not cross the Alleghanies, selling to the West only. This plan had worked very nicely until the death of Mr. Trueman. His widow placed the business in the hands of a Mr. S————, afterwards the librarian of Congress. Suddenly, to Mr. Butler's consternation, S———— began to flood the Eastern market with the grammars of Smith that should have restrained their zeal to the service of Western intellects alone. In fact, I had purchased some of this very edition.

Thinking over the matter quickly, I decided that I could not close out contracts and dispose of my stock earlier than the coming January, but I told Mr. Butler that I could relieve him of his stock of Smith's grammars by exchange, and renew his general stock in the same way. The books could be stored in the second floor of his building, and, when we opened business together, we would have a fresh supply of books on hand and be rid of useless material. S———— was in town prepared to

deluge the East with Smith's grammars. I proposed to Mr. Butler that I should flank him at once, by a means that appeared favorable to us both. That very night I went to New York, crossing on the ferry to Camden with S---- in the same boat. I knew his habits. In spite of his young Lochinvar appearance of dash out of the West, he was a rather easy-going business man, fond of browsing among quaint and ancient volumes of forgotten lore, and thereby losing time. He could tangle himself up in a second-hand bookstore for many hours. Very early in the morning, on the day following our arrival in New York, while S---- doubtless was thinking about breakfast, I was already visiting the booksellers of that city. These gentlemen ordered liberally for Smith's grammars, as well as for other books, giving me what I selected in exchange, and I told my purchasers that, if more "Smith" was needed, to purchase the grammars from me. I have never known exactly what experience Mr. S---- had in New York, in his efforts to dispose of his Western growth of Smith's grammar, but I am sure that he must have labored in arid soil. Having thoroughly forestalled Mr. S---- in New York, I hastened onward to New Haven and saw the trade there; thence, to Boston, where I made very satisfactory exchanges.

This flying campaign was made, of course, without any declaration of the intended partnership between Mr. E. H. Butler and myself. Thus, when January came, we had a very satisfactory stock of new books with which to open our business. Meanwhile, I ceased buying for myself, and aimed to dispose of all my stock of books. I had leased my room for one year only, and, as the year had almost expired, I moved the very small remainder of my stock to E. H. Butler's store. My venture alone in the field of the book trade had been, financially, a very successful year, as things were counted in those modest days. I netted seventeen hundred dollars' profit, free of all expenses.

When the articles of copartnership between Mr. E. H. Butler

and me were ready for our signatures, I found that the one-third interest that had been promised to me was reduced to one fourth. This arbitrary change seemed to me unfair, but I deemed it best to sign the agreement. Otherwise the terms stood as I had expected. The agreement was to last for three years. Our first year together was very satisfactory, and the financial results so encouraging that the future to me seemed assured.

It was the autumn of the year 1847. Three years had passed since I had seen Mary Wright. I had never written to her, and she had been too independent and high-spirited to send me any communication. It was now, when my affairs seemed well established, that I went to Northampton, not to take my customary lonely walk out Bridge Street, and leave the town sad and heavy-hearted, but to stop at the pleasant little old house, under the great elm, and tell Mary Wright the story of my long silence and the years of waiting. I had no reason to believe that her heart might be free, or that she had retained even a feeling of interest for me. It was the time of the year when, in the happy past, we had driven over the valley roads and across the uplands, in the cool air of New England's autumn. Again the landscape was ablaze with the changing colors that precede the bleakness of winter. Yet this autumn was to be a renewal of life, a springtime of the soul, even among the falling leaves.

Our wedding took place on the seventh of February, 1848. It was an important social event for our town and circle of acquaintances. There can be no doubt that this climax of our friendship had been hoped for by these good people, and that in their opinion the course of love had been unduly and unreasonably broken. I can believe that my conduct had been regarded with severe disapproval, and certainly had been misunderstood. It was a large and happy company that gathered in the quaint low-ceiled rooms of the old house. Mary's friends had decorated the interior very tastefully. My old employer, Mr. J. H. Butler, and Mr. Henshaw Bates, son of the senator, acted as masters

of ceremony. The hour was eleven o'clock in the morning. The minister was Rev. E. S. Swift of the Old Church. Afterwards there were simple refreshments, wine and cake, in the plain custom of those days. How long ago it all seems to me, as the scenes develop themselves in my memory! And how long ago it is in reality! Sixty-one years have passed away since then. Of all the gay company, scarcely one remains in this life.

About one o'clock on that happy day, Mary and I left Northampton, accompanied by my brother George and his wife, who had come for the occasion from New York. Greatly to our surprise, we found a special car at the station, arranged for by our good friends, in which a laughing, jolly party of them went with us as far as Springfield. Here they left us, with every expression of good wishes for our welfare and happiness. Our wedding journey was the long trip to Philadelphia. I had no time for a prolonged absence from my business.

The first home that was ours in this city was in a pleasant house on the south side of Chestnut Street, above Twelfth. This was in a good residence neighborhood; still, quite distant from the business center. Here I rented some very comfortable rooms on the third story. The house was owned by a Mrs. Hanson, a lady of considerable wealth. Her housekeeper, Mrs. Lefferts, had charge of the domestic affairs. Besides ourselves there were two other guests. As Mary had few acquaintances in Philadelphia, it was fortunate that Mrs. Hanson became so attached to her, that Mary and she were very much together on drives and shopping expeditions.

But, by the next winter, I found that the new firm of E. H. Butler & Company had not been so successful as I had anticipated. Our rooms had been rather costly. In those days, Arch and Race streets were quiet, respectable thoroughfares, where dwelt a very substantial class of citizens. It is hard to realize now, that Race Street, between Tenth and Eleventh streets, could

have been a neighborhood peopled by the best class of inhabitants; where clean-swept fronts shone resplendent in white-marble steps and white or green shutters; where well-kept yards extended back through the deep lots to Cherry Street, with plots of grass and borders of flower beds. Here in a block of houses, called Montgomery Square, I found most comfortable rooms, in a boarding house kept by a lady from Connecticut, a Mrs. Brown. The house was well filled with pleasant people. Mrs. Brown was a splendid housekeeper, an excellent, motherly woman. Her interest in us and kindness were most delightful, especially as our first child, Anna, was born in this new home.

Not long after this I rented a house on Vine Street, and later purchased one on Vine Street, near Eighteenth Street, close by Logan Square, in which we lived for many years. Early in our wedded life, Mary's sister, Anna Wright, became a member of our household. She had enjoyed a most interesting experience as governess in some Southern families, and knew much of the life passed on those great, remote plantations in Alabama and, amid more comfort, in Virginia. In this home of our own, on quiet old Vine Street, near the green open space of Logan Square, we passed many peaceful years, and here all our other children—Theodore, Caroline, and Edgar—were born, with the exception of a little daughter, Mattie, who died in early infancy, and Arthur, who chanced to have Northampton as his birthplace.

E. H. Butler and myself continued in business together during the three years of our contract. During the last year, however, I noted that conditions were developing that did not promise so favorable results as the first years had indicated. It seemed best to both of us that we should separate. This we did most amicably, and we remained on friendly relations until Mr. E. H. Butler's death.

The experience that was to be mine, in the new business relations I was about to form, was a peculiar one; so unusual, in fact, that I feel justified in giving some reference to it in detail.

There was a very agreeable and genial gentleman in the business of bookselling and publishing with whom I had become so intimately acquainted, in a business way, that I believed my estimate of his character was as correct as it was favorable. He was a New Englander, a graduate of Yale College, and had developed a business in lines somewhat different from those of E. H. Butler's house. Mr. X. wished to find a partner, and we agreed to form such a copartnership on certain very simple terms. I accepted his statement in regard to his capital, and it was arranged that the capital which I would place should equal that which he stated to be his own. The term of our copartnership was to be for three years, beginning January 1, 1850.

The necessary legal papers were prepared by Mr. X.'s lawyer, and copies given to Mr. X. and myself. Our signatures, however, had not yet been set to these papers, when I was called to New York to attend the spring trade sale. In the midst of the activities of this busy and important meeting I received a letter from my wife, suggesting that I had better return to Philadelphia as soon as possible. This was such an unusual sort of epistle for Mary to write, that I acted on the suggestion immediately. On my return, to my entire surprise, I found that Mr. X. was showing the effects of drinking, and then learned, for the first time, that, for years, he had been a victim of this habit and indulged to a great excess. I found, too, that his store had been mismanaged, that he had contracted many debts, and that, as a result, the actual free capital, to which I was to add an equal amount, was far below the stated figures. I was in a trying position. Our papers of copartnership were not signed, but my word was given in assent.

Mr. X. was anxious to form the new firm. My wife and I knew his excellent wife intimately. Under these circumstances we felt the deepest sympathy for her. Their family was a large one, consisting of eight children. Then, too, I had been deceived as to Mr. X.'s personal character and the actual amount of his

capital, but I knew very well that the trade of this store was large, extending throughout Pennsylvania and all the adjoining states; that, under efficient management, this trade could be maintained and greatly extended. I determined my course promptly.

Going to Mr. X.'s lawyer, I explained the situation that was presented, and my desire to have new articles of copartnership prepared. In these the term of copartnership was to be limited to one year, from January 1st now passed, or as long as mutually agreeable. We were to have equal rights and restrictions in the care of our affairs, and a careful limit placed on the amounts of our withdrawals of funds for personal expenses. Finally, all notes or checks must be drawn and signed by myself. This determination of mine was unlooked for by Mr. X., but, on delivering to him the new documents of copartnership, I told him plainly that no other articles would be signed by me.

I had talked very candidly to Mr. X. about his weakness, and had fully satisfied myself that any reform in his habits was very unlikely. Half of our first year together had now elapsed. Sometime in the fall of this same year, a most intimate friend of Mr. X. called on me, and expressed the wish that I would extend to my partner all the forbearance and friendly consideration in my power, for his own sake and that of his wife and children. I replied that I had been acting thus for several months, but, having no confidence in his power to reform his habits of excessive drinking, I fully expected that the close of the year would bring about our separation in business. This good friend of Mr. X. then informed me, further, that there were reasons to believe that Mr. X. would develop a lasting reformation, as he realized as never before the peril of the situation for himself and his family, and that in his feelings there was a deep religious influence and earnestness. I replied that I had no confidence at all in any improvement; that I had watched him closely, and learned that he had no self-control in the face of this wretched

habit. This was my fixed opinion, and yet a strange thing happened.

The partnership between Mr. X. and myself was to continue for more than twelve years, without any failure on his part to control his weakness. During these years we were successful. I can claim, justly, that most of this success resulted from my good business training and methods; that the weight of responsibility fell to my share; that I was a rather stern comrade for my partner; but he held fast to his determination. Then, too, his genial and social qualities made him a general favorite. His ability to make friends was a real advantage for our affairs.

We think of business to-day in terms of very large figures and great proportions. We speak glibly of corporations and companies and individuals whose capital rates at millions of dollars; whose activities cover vast spaces in the home and foreign markets. Business is the resultant of many forces working together in complicated plan, and yet with an order that suggests the harmony of a great orchestra. It is already difficult to realize, that, sixty years ago, great numbers of private individuals in every city conducted small, independent, and separate enterprises, in which a capital of one or two hundred thousand dollars represented very large undertakings. But all over Philadelphia, and in other cities to a less degree, were scattered small shops and stores in varying degrees of importance, even down to the modest little stores kept by widows or maiden ladies, whose ambitions centered in the sale of trimmings, stationery, or other small articles. It was rather characteristic of Philadelphia, at the time of my arrival there and for many years later, that such small shops gave employment to thousands of people, residing often in the same buildings in which they conducted their business, and obtaining a fair competency.

In the bookseller's and publisher's business, perhaps more than in any other, there existed a certain friendly bond of interests among the men engaged in the trade, a certain freemasonry

that was common throughout the country. This guild spirit was encouraged very largely by the old custom of trade sales. The trade sale is a forgotten institution to-day, but, in the period before the Civil War, it brought together booksellers from all parts of the country to meetings in which a certain social element was very manifest, in the midst of the activities of the market place. Two important meetings of this character were held annually, one in the early spring, and, the second, in October. The New York trade sales came first in order, and those of Philadelphia followed. Such sales were held also in Boston. The period of a sale covered about two weeks. In New York, they were conducted by Banks, Richards & Company. Books were consigned to this firm from many publishers, in various parts of the country. Bids were offered for the books presented in this form of auction, and, when the bid was accepted, the figure at which such a book was sold became, for that sale, at least, its standard price. Any purchaser could order as many more copies of this special book as he might desire.

The sales were conducted in a roomy hall furnished with benches for the accommodation of the attending booksellers. Beginning at nine o'clock in the morning, the sales continued until noon, when we all partook of a lunch furnished by the firm of auctioneers. This ample and very well prepared lunch we ate standing or moving about to converse with acquaintances. Smoking was allowable, and the affair was so informal that opportunity was given for much jesting and amusement. At one o'clock the sale was resumed until six o'clock, when, as guests of the firm, we partook of supper. At seven o'clock the bidding was reopened, and did not close until nine or ten o'clock in the evening. All books sent to the auctioneers were catalogued, so that the stock of invoices could be consulted, and one could map out the special line of purchases he might care to consider. Of course, the purchaser could duplicate as many copies as he wished at the price accepted for the invoice. Meetings of this char-

acter, occurring in several cities twice each year, and lasting for two weeks, brought the members of the book trade into very pleasant and even intimate relations. Personally, I never considered that it was advantageous to consign invoices for sale in this way, but I purchased freely, obtaining very satisfactory rates for excellent stock. Many pleasant memories group themselves about these great meetings of my trade. The strictly business side of them was full of interest and some excitement, while, as a social occasion, they were most enjoyable.

The bookseller of those days, beyond the limits of his own special publications, very largely renewed his general stock by the purchases made at those great sales, and by the system of exchange, the trading of books of which he had an oversupply for others which he lacked. Such methods of necessity brought the members of the book trade into very close relations with one another. The custom continued up to the outbreak of the Civil War. In the changes incident to that period of disturbance it was interrupted, and never again regained its former importance.

CHAPTER VII

REMINISCENCES OF WAR TIME

Development of antislavery sentiment—Strength of the South and the Democratic Party—Increase in value of slaves with development of cotton—Timidity of the business men of the North—Impressions of a Northern man when in the South country—Increase of sectional bitterness—Outbreak of war—Effect on business—Experience of a New England family in the army—Sketch of the work of Massachusetts in the war—Effect on business—Philadelphia in war time—The Union League and enlistment of colored troops—Close of the Rebellion.

In recounting the events of my year in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, when a boy of about eleven years of age, I referred to the interest taken by my brother-in-law, James Dunham, in the antislavery movement. The course of the years had added to the flood of opposition gathering in New England and throughout the North against slavery. Yet the abolitionists did not represent the great body of the people. There was a general regret and dissatisfaction that slavery existed in our country, but it was not an opposition so intense and dominant that its power needed to be feared by the South. Northern business people were timid. They dreaded an upheaval that would damage trade, and their conscience and sympathies were not aroused sufficiently to regard favorably the question of sacrificing personal interests for the sake of a question of ethics.

Except during the period of Washington's presidency and that of John Adams and of John Quincy Adams, the South really had controlled the national policies and principles in relation to legislation. The large Democratic Party of the North had always been subservient to the Southern wing of this party. Indeed, through these Northern Democrats, the South had dominated at Washington. On the other hand, the Northern Whigs

were not aggressive, and were hoping always for compromises instead of conflicts. Even in the Southern states, however, the institution of slavery had long been regarded as a temporary condition. Many of her best people had tolerated slavery, feeling that at some time, not in their own day, by some method at present not imaginable, free labor would take the place of slaves. When, however, cotton became all important, and rose to the title, "Cotton is king," all uncertainty as to the need which existed in the South for slavery vanished. The commercial value of slaves increased enormously, and there was a constant demand for an increase of the "blacks." Thus, while the people of the slaveholding states were developing a stronger determination to maintain slavery, we of the North were slowly but surely feeling a growing disgust and horror of it.

When a Northern man went to a Southern city, in those days, he felt that he had entered a foreign land. We recognized an atmosphere to which we were unaccustomed. It pervaded the whole social fabric—church, school, and legislative hall. It influenced the relations of home and business life. Although nothing might be said of its existence, its presence was like an evil spirit that filled the Southern lands, and the man from the free states was depressed in temper, and appalled by the conditions developed by this slave system. He was amazed that the people of this foreign land could not only tolerate such a system, but that they regarded it, some as a necessity and others as a divinely-appointed institution. So arose a bitterness between all classes of the North and South, which was intensified by the political struggles associated with the exclusion of slavery from the new states admitted to the Union. The publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the outbreak caused by John Brown both added much fuel to the fire of growing hatred. Still, in spite of all these conditions, a strong, conservative element of antislavery people in the North would have welcomed any compromise that would have averted war. I am positive that an arrangement

could have been made, by which a form of gradual emancipation could have been effected, the slaveholders receiving full compensation for their human property. So desirous was this important element in the North that peaceful means should prevail, that it would have accepted an arrangement by which full political restriction would have been placed on the "blacks," so that they could not have hoped for citizenship. But the Southern leaders were determined, aggressive, and deluded by the belief that the patient Democrats of the North would support them to any limit, even to that of secession.

They were in error. It was on a Sunday evening, just as I was entering the old Tenth Street Dutch Reformed Church, that William J. Mence, one of the ushers, told me that Fort Sumter had been attacked by the South Carolina troops, and that President Lincoln had called on the loyal states for seventy-five thousand men for the Federal army.

This act of South Carolina united the whole North, especially, as Secretary Seward pleasantly remarked, that the war would be finished within three months. And we were in error. We were overconfident, and could not realize that the long four years of civil war lay before us. But Bull Run awoke us to the seriousness of the struggle, so that, by the end of the first year of the war, business was in a condition of utter confusion and loss.

Fortunately for me, I had no large affairs in the South, but in the border states I had much that went to wreckage. These were days, however, when some men with sufficient courage, capital, and judgment bought in large supplies of stock, and continued to increase it, knowing that the demands would be urgent and that prices would rise in proportion.

In the beginning of 1862, I proposed to my partner that we should close up our business and separate. The amounts on our books were equalized and, our interests being equal, the termination of our copartnership was easily effected. So we parted after an association of twelve years in business.

About this time, my brother George proposed that we should go to Washington and visit the city. This we did, spending about a week there and seeing the various camps. It was during the period of the three months' service, before the fatal day of Bull Run.

All my nephews of proper age, five in number, enlisted early in Massachusetts regiments. The experiences of their army service were similar to so many of the New England soldiers, that one need not think deeply to appreciate the radical changes that developed in that section of country as a result of the war. George Bliss, the oldest son of my brother William, had enlisted in the Tenth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Before the expiration of the three months' term of enlistment, he resigned his place in that regiment and re-enlisted in the Fifty-second Regiment of Massachusetts Infantry. He was appointed captain of one of its companies, which was composed of men from Amherst and near-by villages. He had a splendid record as an officer. He fell in battle at Port Hudson, near New Orleans, shot through both lungs. His brother William was a lieutenant in the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Infantry, and was engaged in all the active service of that noted regiment, which was attached to the Sixth Army Corps. He was promoted to a captaincy. After Gettysburg, as his brother George had been killed, and William was the only son left to his widowed mother, his family urged him to resign. He did this against his will, but from the knowledge that his family needed his financial as well as moral support. Edward Bliss, a son of my brother Edward, was a member of a Massachusetts infantry regiment enlisted at Worcester. He was severely wounded in the chest, at Antietam. The ball was never extracted, but he lived to fill an honorable place in the community where he resided. His twin brother Edwin, also in a Massachusetts infantry regiment, died from fever at Newbourne. Theodore Kingsley, a son of my sister Caroline, served in a Massachusetts regiment and

returned home uninjured. So, of these five nephews, two died, one was wounded so that he could never again be considered a robust man, and two came back unhurt.

Massachusetts went into the war almost as to a crusade. She had been preparing for the conflict. Her military organizations were in good shape and ready to take the field. At the very beginning of the struggle, when Washington was denuded of troops, it was the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment of Infantry that fought its way through the mob at Baltimore, to save and garrison the national capital. They reached Washington, but the way was closed behind them. It was the Eighth Massachusetts Regiment with General Butler that opened up a new route to the capital by the way of Annapolis. Again, it was the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment that was a part of Butler's column to enter Baltimore, and overawe that rebellious city from Federal Hill, a movement that gave confidence to the loyalists of Maryland and helped to save the state to the Union.

I do not wish to stir up the embers of a burned-out fire. We have long ago forgiven those whom we considered to be our enemies, but we would not forget what is worthy of remembrance—the cheerful response to the call for troops, the splendid record in the field, the loss of New England's best blood; for she gave her best.

I believe that I give the correct figures, when I state that Massachusetts furnished 159,254 men, being 13,492 in excess of the troops strictly required for all the different calls for enlistment. Of this total, 13,165 served in the navy. It has been claimed that "foreign hirelings" filled the ranks of the Northern regiments of volunteers. Of the thousands of men from Massachusetts, only 907 were non-resident foreigners. Statistics show that 3,543 officers and men were killed in battle. Deaths from wounds claimed 1,986, and from disease, 5,672. One thousand, eight hundred and forty-three men died in Confederate prisons, and 1,026 are given as among the lost and unrecorded.

The colored troops numbered 6,039. It was a worthy record that these thousands from Massachusetts made on the battlefields of Virginia.

"Lift again the stately emblem on the Bay State's rusted shield.
Give to northern winds the Pine Tree on our banner's tattered field."

Thus wrote that most peaceful of men, Whittier, in the fiery zeal that blazed up in his soul at the war for freedom; and the sons of the Bay State answered his call, and the shield was no longer rusted, but borne back with honor.

It was a homogeneous army, that from New England. It was the last response of the pure, old New England stock to the country's call to duty and to arms. Lives that would have filled its workshops and farms, its law courts and pulpits and counting-rooms, its schools, colleges, and laboratories, were lost on the battlefield or in the hospitals.

Among the returning troops were many men on whom the four years of activity had wrought a spirit of restlessness, and these wandered away to seek larger spheres of action in the great cities and in the growing West. Newcomers from Ireland and Canada took their places. Later came the immigration from Italy, Rumania, Russia, and Syria, until, to-day, representatives from all the nations on earth have found homes in the land of the English Puritans. In some of the towns of western New England, a little coterie of elderly ladies, most of whom are spinsters, together with a few old gentlemen, unite in activities of charity, education, and reform in politics, striving to hand on the torch that has come to their feeble hands from a strong and aggressive ancestry. Perhaps that is all that the old, dying race can do, hand on the torch of liberty and law, of high ideals in civic affairs and education, and of respect for what was good and true and beautiful in the days of old.

Philadelphia was an intensely loyal city. It lay so near the "frontier," where the army of the Potomac was acting, that it

was, indeed, the last home city to cheer the Union soldiers going to the front, and the first to welcome them on their return. We had a few "Copperheads," as the Southern sympathizers were called, but the overwhelming mass of the population was enthusiastically loyal to the Union cause.

I joined the Union League very soon after its formation. It was not a social club, then, but was organized to give moral and financial support to the government. I was made treasurer of the club's committee to raise and train colored troops. This was quite a long time before the proclamation of emancipation. The government's policy in regard to freedom for the slaves was timid and uncertain. Prejudice against the negro was very decided, even among the most loyal supporters of the Union. Many of us felt, however, that we were lacking in the courage of our convictions if we made war on secession alone. Beside this question of principle, and associated with it, we felt, too, that it was most shortsighted and impolitic to refuse the help of the "blacks," in a war that must eventuate in their freedom. Our committee was a very unpopular one, but we had such men on it as E. W. Clark, in whose office we met, Abram Barker, Henry C. Lea, Samuel S. White, and Charles Wise. As soon as we had any encouragement from the drift of events and public opinion, we began to accept colored recruits and form them into companies and regiments, the camp being at Chelten Hills. We developed several regiments, under the command of Gen. Louis Wagner. Many of our fellow members of the League were far from being in sympathy with our efforts, and we had no really encouraging success until the proclamation of emancipation. After this, recruiting developed rapidly, and we formed a number of regiments under white officers. Later, as these troops began to prove their efficiency, black men were accepted as corporals and sergeants, but none above the rank of non-commissioned officers. In those stirring times the League was located on Chestnut Street, near Twelfth.

Gettysburg threw Philadelphia into a state of alarm that to-day can be scarcely realized. Defeat of the army of the Potomac was anticipated. Many banks and jewelers sent valuables away to New York City. Batteries were rapidly thrown up along the Schuylkill, in West Philadelphia, and to the north and south of the city. The calm and tranquil figure of von Humboldt stands on a bluff at the east end of Girard Avenue bridge, where a small, circular earthwork was erected and arranged for artillery. As a member of the Home Guard, I was active in the drills and preparations of these home defenders. It is pathetic to think of the defense we could have developed against the veterans of Lee and Longstreet and the army of northern Virginia.

My sister-in-law, Anna Wright, took great interest in the organized work of the women of the city to meet incoming trains at the Cooper Shop Station, where the soldiers arrived from the North or South. Here food in ample supply was ever ready for distribution, and, what the men appreciated almost as much, friendly words of cheer or welcome or encouragement from the ladies in attendance. Anna worked, also, in the hospitals, visiting the sick and wounded, writing letters for them, buying little delicacies, ever ready with a cheery word. The men did not always appreciate the kindly attention, and yet it was rare that they failed in this respect. At the Turner's Lane Hospital, Anna had noted a very handsome officer who was utterly bored to rebellion by the attentions of the lady visitors. One of these angels of the ward drifted into the room, glanced about for a moment, and glided to the officer's bedside. "My poor sufferer! What can I do for you?" "Go away! Go away! I don't want anything!" growled the handsome son of Mars. "Oh, but surely I can do something to allay your pain." "No, you can't! All I want is to be let alone!" "Let me bathe your face," pleads the angel. "All right, go ahead and do it; but if you do, you'll be the fifteenth woman that has washed my face this morning!"

But the work of the lady visitors was of inestimable value in cheering the men and assisting the medical staff. Dressings that would be regarded as microbe bearers, to-day, were prepared in churches, from old linen and muslin, picked into lint by women and children who enjoyed the social phases of this gathering together for works of mercy. But no one dreamed of aseptic surgery in those times. The Sanitary Commission, whose labors in the field, camp, and hospital were of untold value for the physical comfort and moral improvement of the soldiers, covered Logan Square with buildings and held a great fair, then known as the Sanitary Fair. It lasted during many weeks. Mr. Lincoln came as a visitor, and many other celebrated men of those stirring times showed their zeal and interest in the work of the Commission. The erection of the buildings, however, so injured the noble old trees of the Square that they have deteriorated ever since.

As I look out on this Square from a window of my house, or as my faithful Jacob rolls me in my invalid's chair along the walks, the almost forgotten past recurs very vividly to me amid the great changes of to-day. The scenes of other days appear as in a dream. Again, moving southward, the troops go by in serried columns through the streets, the tramp of infantry in endless lines, and the rumble of artillery and wagons. I see the stately and mournful pomp of Lincoln's funeral procession moving through the streets to the music of dirges.

But the end came, at last. The church bells rang out in glad chimes when Richmond had fallen; then Appomattox and peace.

CHAPTER VIII

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSINESS AND RETIREMENT FROM ACTIVE LIFE

Theodore Bliss & Company—Family removes from the city to a country home—Interest in local affairs of the new neighborhood—Organized charity—Chairman of school board—Remarks on the politics of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania—Foresees the development of great changes in business—Expansion and formation of large enterprises—Changes in the book trade—Retirement from business.

The war was in active progress, and the outcome still very uncertain, when I re-entered business. The firm of Theodore Bliss & Company located in a building on Third Street, above Arch. For those days it was a good location, and had a roomy, well-lighted salesroom. As we consider conditions to-day, it would have been regarded as a very inferior kind of building for a respectable firm. My efforts to revive my business were fairly successful, and I remained on Third Street until circumstances induced me to purchase a much better building on Fifth Street, No. 44, facing the cemetery of Christ Church. With this large store, I purchased also a smaller building which adjoined in the rear, on the adjacent North Street. For my purposes, the wide, deep second story on Fifth Street sufficed for office and salesroom, and I rented all the other floors to firms engaged in various lines of trade.

My business was a general one of bookselling and publishing. It extended over several states, but was most active in the towns of Pennsylvania, where I supplied the local trade with every variety of book from fiction to spelling primers, and with all articles of stationery. I was in close touch with all my Phila-

delphia colleagues in the book trade, with whom I made frequent exchanges and did quite a volume of business.

On the whole, those were peaceful days of contentment, in which the flying years lapsed one into another so that the flight of time was scarcely noted. As our children were reaching ages when the air and confinement of the town were bad conditions for their proper growth, Mary and I decided to find a home outside of the city limits. Such a place we discovered not far from Germantown, and to this country home we removed in June of 1868. There we passed thirteen very happy years, although the tragic death of our oldest son, Theodore, within a few weeks after our removal from the city, cast a deep gloom over the beginning of this country life.

In spite of the very fair degree of success that attended my business affairs, and the comforts of our home life, I was becoming more and more conscious of a creeping shadow that was eventually to obscure much of life's sunshine for me, and was destined to shut me away from the active affairs of mankind into the narrow confines of an invalid's chamber. As yet, however, my chronic illness had assumed the form only of sharp but transitory attacks of rheumatic gout. I could transact my affairs, and take part in the various interests of our suburban community.

It was during those years that I served on the school board of the district, developed our local society for organizing charity, and participated in the management of the parish work of the Kenderton Presbyterian Church. The need for united action of citizens to meet the increasing suffering that comes from want of thrift, from intemperance, from shiftlessness and indolence among the unintelligent laboring classes was beginning to be recognized. Throughout the country, in all large cities, committees of citizens were forming to consider how best the growing evil of beggary and abject poverty could be met and overcome.

In organizing the local branch of this work, I was a partner

with the clergyman of the Episcopal parish of our neighborhood, the Rev. Joseph R. Moore. He was a man who united a kindly nature with a keen, practical view of life. The rector of a singularly difficult parish, requiring great firmness and yet tact in the handling of its affairs, he still found time to interest himself greatly in the work of our organized charity association. Our friendship lasted until his death, in 1908, which was the result mainly of overwork and worry with increasing cares of his parish, together with the physical weakness of his increasing age.

I had some little taste of the political methods in vogue in Philadelphia, in my service as chairman of our district school board, which certainly did not encourage me to venture far into the meshes of "politics." I had been a Republican from the founding of that party, but had never been reconciled to the methods of the "organization" and to the evils that resulted from bossism. For this reason I welcomed the signs of discontent that developed, twenty years ago, in the formation of an independent movement that aimed at reform within the party. I have followed these efforts ever since, with all the loyal backing that my financial contributions and personal vote could give, only to see the party organization succeed year after year, and to know that Philadelphia and Pennsylvania were becoming more and more shackled under the rule of that most evil combination for a democratic republic, the partnership of the political boss and municipal contractor with the great industrial "trusts" of the city and state. Long ago, I predicted that both state and city would develop most of the conditions which now prevail, and which have been characterized as a combination of corruption and contentment. I foresaw the physical and material ills that were in store for the community quite as much as I did the moral degeneration.

The same evil influences are at work throughout the country; but, in Pennsylvania and its two great cities, the resistance has been feeble, spasmodic, not always in real, bitter earnest, and

too often under the leadership of what Mr. Roosevelt terms, "good, weak men." Then, too, with these conditions, and with the want of experienced leaders, firm and sincere, there has been a loose and imperfectly developed opposition force, in which the public is conscious of a mingling of various interests, selfish, hopelessly transcendental, sordidly materialistic. Such a fusion of good, bad, and indifferent has too often given the impression of an inefficient and not trustworthy political mob. The long political reign of Donald Cameron, followed by the longer rule of his well-trained successor, Quay, has built up an oligarchy as close, well-ordered, and compact as ever ruled an Italian city republic. The peculiarly flaccid and unresisting character of the Philadelphia citizenship has allowed of the usurpation of its municipal government by a combination of politicians with the contractors for the public works, that has gradually centralized into political boss and contractor combined in the same individual. These men watch their interests keenly in regard to all legislation at Harrisburg affecting their business affairs in Philadelphia; while, by the local party organization, they control the two chambers of the city councils completely. They are also in close relationship with the national Republican organization, and with the Republican administration at Washington.

I look back regretfully upon the series of excellent mayors who headed the municipal administration, in older days. Until twenty years ago, discussions were held in the Council chambers. The pros and cons of a measure introduced for consideration were propounded and answered. Indeed, even with all the intrigue and maneuvering of that time, matters of legislation were studied with some earnest consideration of their value to the city. It has long since ceased to be so. I am assured that the people's representatives in the municipal chambers pass measures without discussion, and on the direction of the party bosses. I am well aware that some of the most serious defects of our present system of municipal and state government are not to be

proved in black and white. The relation of large corporate interests with the small circle of politicians in absolute control of city and state is obscure, hidden, and unprovable; yet this relationship is believed by every one to be a real and active, as well as a sinister, influence in our political business and social affairs.

Citizens scold at these conditions. The press is eloquent in editorial wrath against them, but the oligarchy's reign goes smoothly on, and the same organization is returned to office by large majorities after every election. Yet that organization of representative citizens, with its pleasant club house at Broad and Sansom streets, that Union League, organized to uphold Lincoln and a rule of, for, and by the people, could alter all these things in a year, if its members would unite in earnest, aggressive, even bitter rebellion against the rule of bossism. Temperamentally I am a bad hater of an arbitrary and tyrannous government. I have at times felt that only gunpowder, a Cromwell, and civil war could burst through and ruin the oligarchy. But it needs none of those things. An awakened popular sentiment, based on conviction that our municipal and state governments are handled in the interest of the few and not for the good of all, that no compromise can be had with the upholders of these methods, would effect their overthrow. To hold them down and forever under, the sentiment must be crystallized into an organization, in which every citizen does his service at the primaries and at the election booth.

We can never have an honest and businesslike management of our public affairs that will have a long continuity of existence. Our very cumbersome form of government, as a democratic republic, precludes all possibility that the struggle between selfish, personal interests and the general public welfare shall ever cease. However, conditions need not be so entirely on the oligarchy's side as they exist to-day in the fair state of Pennsylvania and its two chief cities. In the rough and tumble of our

popular form of government, the people should be able to direct a general average of good government, if the citizens will stay awake, assume their own dictatorship, and be on the alert to see that the republic shall suffer no detriment.

The flood of years was bearing my family and business affairs on a quiet, peaceful course towards that critical spring of 1873. I had not foreseen the financial crisis that threatened the country, but, for several years before this event, I was becoming convinced that very important changes were developing in the book trade. Undoubtedly the same changes were being felt in all lines of business. It was the short transition period that came between the affairs of the middle of the nineteenth century and that century's last quarter. The days of small things, of strictly private and individual undertakings,—we might say, the days of "the simple life,"—were passing away. In their place was a spirit of restless expansion, a tendency to form large combinations and associations of enterprises that might be supposed to have interests in common.

"Community of interests" is a large, free and easy term to express the hunger for wealth, the ambition to control, that has led to trust formations and the magnifying of a few individuals. I am far from decrying the advantages that have come from such a development—the saving in the cost of production, the lessened cost to the consumer. The wicked side of this centralization, and of these combinations of trade in restraint of competition, has been so dilated upon in sermon, political speech, editorial, and magazine article, that scarcely anything more remains to be said in opposition.

I recognized the coming changes, and knew that only one of two courses was open to me if I would meet the future without loss—either I must enlarge my business greatly or I must retire from it altogether. One of the first signs that a change in the book trade in Philadelphia was at hand developed in the house of J. B. Lippincott & Company. From a very obscure beginning,

in a little store on Fourth Street near Race, the enterprise of the founder of this house had led to the growth of a large and important establishment, probably the most important publishing and wholesale book firm in our city. Three individuals who had developed under J. B. Lippincott's somewhat stern and aggressive management, and who were associated in the bindery and printing departments of his establishment, conceived the idea of leaving this firm and establishing a rival enterprise of their own. None of these men were fitted by experience, by judgment, or by temperament for such an undertaking, but I saw that the new firm of Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger would, at least for a time, disturb the conditions of trade by a bitter rivalry with the stronger and older house, and that a desperate war of cutting in prices would result. Already in New York and Boston the older houses were enlarging their establishments, and doing business on a scale more as it is done to-day. There was no place for small firms, even if they specialized in certain lines of trade. Expansion and combination were essential.

My physical infirmity was increasing rapidly. I had made a very fair competence, in the long years of a successful business. I did not feel the need or the inclination to plunge into the struggles and risks of the new movement in trade. It was a most fortunate determination for me, that I resolved to dispose of my stock and my stereotype plates and retire completely from business. I accomplished all this very quickly, so that, when the financial crash of 1873 came, I was out of the storm.

The house of J. B. Lippincott is a very respectable firm even to this day, long after its founder's death. The firm of Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, after a course as disastrous as it was short, is a forgotten name. I would not imply that many failures occurred among the firms in the book trade, but the large houses became even more important, the small publishers and wholesale dealers consolidated, retired from business, or were later amal-

gamated into book departments of the rapidly-developing department stores.

And so the old order of things changed, giving place to the new. With the abandonment of the semiannual trade sales, the cordial relations between the members of the book trade throughout the country disappeared; the guild spirit vanished. The publication of books went more into the hands of a few great houses in each city, who did their own printing and binding. Gradually many of these began to confine their business to the sale of their own publications. The bookstores where the proprietor and his older clerks knew the character of the books on the shelves of their salesroom, and could outline the contents of a volume to a purchaser, were reduced in number to a very few in each city, patronized by a small circle of book lovers. Public libraries developed to such a splendid degree, that the private library of the home was needed no longer. Every variety of volume, from the most costly book of reference to nursery tales, could be had without money and without price. The great department stores possess book departments that are larger and better equipped for retail sales, than existed, in the older days, in any single bookstore.

With this wide distribution of firms engaged in the retail sale of books, as a phase of a vast general business in all commodities, from shoes to hats, from false hair to drug supplies and groceries, came a competition that resulted, and still obtains, in a great reduction in prices for books, almost to the level of the publisher's charges. I do not criticise these changes adversely. They were the natural development of an age of greater enterprise than had preceded such expansion.

It was all this that I foresaw, in my quiet office on Fifth Street, and I was glad to slip out and away from the coming period of storm and stress.

CHAPTER IX

ILLNESS AND OLD AGE

Development of a chronic illness—Remarks of an invalid on his invalidism—Feelings of regret that the end of life is approaching—An expression of religious faith—Not "Good night," but "Good morning."

The year 1873, in which I retired from business, and which witnessed a financial panic that is a shadow in the business history of America, marked for me the beginning of the more serious phases of my chronic ill health.

Far back in the summer of 1859, I had taken my family to Mary's old home in Northampton, Massachusetts. We were expecting the birth of another child. The pleasant old house on Bridge Street was a comfortable haven of refuge from the intense heat of Philadelphia. My intention was to establish our household affairs, and return as soon as possible to my business in Philadelphia. One pleasant day in that July, I erected a swing in the old woodshed, which the children enjoyed greatly, and there I spent some time in swinging them. That evening, I noticed some soreness in my right shoulder. Of course, I supposed that this was a mere strain of the muscles. It marked the beginning of a peculiar malady that has affected me with steadily-increasing severity. One joint after another has been distorted and the limbs bound, until I could no longer move about on cane or crutches, and was forced to the continuous use of a wheel chair. Physicians have had many names for this interesting malady and many theories to account for its development, and many have been the forms of treatment that I have received at their hands. They name it rheumatoid arthritis, or arthritis deformans.

I have never received any benefit from medical treatment.

Some relief has come from visits to the springs of Virginia, and to Richfield, in New York. What has kept me from that complete anchylosis which makes the victim rigid from head to foot, as immovable as a log, has resulted from the constant exercise of all available muscles and joints, together with a careful diet, and chiefly, perhaps, the faithful care of my devoted wife, until weakened health made her, too, an invalid.

I wish that my very marked case of rheumatoid arthritis could have proved a source of successful study for the good of other sufferers from this disease. I can honestly say that I would not wish my worst enemy to suffer as I have; to have had the fate of being bound hand and foot and imprisoned within an invalid's chamber, while the mind remained clear and active and still alert to the affairs of everyday life. I say this in no spirit of bitterness. I hate the confinement. I hate this chair on wheels. I flinch from the pains of movement. My temperament is of the aggressive type that asks no sympathy, and even causes me to resent any expression of pity at what people would consider a cruel fate. I have known long years of suffering and helplessness. I have had nights of unrest and without sleep. I have lived alone, hour after hour, in my quiet room, with only my thoughts and remembrances for companions. Yet, in my extreme old age, I can say with perfect sincerity that I would live this life of mine all over again gladly, even including this long period of illness. For, in this eighty-eighth year of my age, life seems to me a very little and short experience. The hours for sleep, for rest, for refreshment shorten these years greatly, when measured by activity, by the accomplishment of results. I have been a man of action, and I must agree with the writer who says, that we live in deeds and thoughts and feelings more than in years and in the figures on a dial. I can have the thoughts and feelings still. And so, in my great age and feebleness, I am not ready to renounce life gladly, and welcome the peace of death.

And yet it is growing late. Mary, who shared nobly with me the sorrows and trials of life, as well as its few joys, has found her rest. The friends of other days are all dead. I am the last one that remains of my family. Long ago most of my associates in business and active affairs passed away. My children are married and live in homes of their own. They have their own interests in which I have no part. Surely, night and the end of the road must be very near at hand.

The religious faith which my mother taught me in childhood has undergone many changes in form, as I have been influenced by the current thought of later years. Yet, in substance, that faith has been my comfort and strength, as well as my guide, through years of suffering. I can trust in Him whom to know aright is life. I can hope for better things, in an existence free from the burden of this poor distorted body of mine, where, in conditions so changed that we cannot conceive of their character, we have faith to believe that personality continues, that the best in us finds opportunity and noble incentive for activity; where, in a spiritual sense, we may run and not be weary, we may walk and not faint.

"Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not 'Good night,' but in some brighter clime
Bid me 'Good morning.'"

CONCLUSION

The verses that close the last chapter of my father's reminiscences were a favorite quotation of his, when a visitor, on leaving him, stood by his chair and said good-by. Less than three months after the completion of our joint work in collecting the notes for this memoir, Theodore Bliss found an end of his suffering and entered into rest. He died on March 23, 1910. It was a beautiful afternoon, the day before Easter Sunday, when a small company of his relatives and friends saw his coffin lowered into the grave beside that of his devoted wife. "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." The words were said in the stillness of that sunny afternoon, in Laurel Hill Cemetery, with all nature just ready to burst into the resurrection of springtime.

Among his carefully kept books and documents, we found a volume the entries in which dated far back to the early years of his business career. In this had been recorded the gifts that my father had made to private individuals and public institutions. The entries were dated until within a few weeks of his death. The sums thus given, when computed for each year, totaled an amount very close to one tenth of his income from his business or investments. They represented a wide variety of interests—homes for children, societies for the care and education of children, gifts to missionary societies, contributions to schools and colleges for the education of negro students.

I knew that my father had been generous in his contributions to charities, but I had never realized how broadly his interest had extended to all classes of work and effort that could improve the citizenship of the future and the development of our

country. Such gifts represented not alone a feeling of sympathy for the poor and needy, but were expressions of real patriotism.

My father was unable to express an emotion in words. It was possible to misunderstand much of his character and conduct by a failure to realize this limitation in verbal expression. The more deeply he was moved by a sentiment, the less was he able to voice his feelings.

It seems to me that, even with the appreciable degree of success in his career, he never had a fair chance to take the places of importance in public as well as private affairs that he was entitled to by the keenness and clearness of his mind, his strong sense of justice, and his ability to form rational judgments. The restriction of his activity in life resulted, in part, from ill health, the beginnings of which long preceded the development into physical helplessness. His temperament was such that he could not compromise a question of principle. For this reason he may not have been a good co-worker with associates in organizations political or social. Such a man frequently makes a wise and firm ruler, but lacks the art of yielding at one point to win at another, which seems to be requisite when associations of men counsel together for common interests.

It is with the feeling that the man himself was worthy of a fair presentation of his character and principles that I have prepared this memoir for publication. A. A. B.